New
Rosamund

Rosamund,

COUNTESS OF CLARENSTEIN.

I see what you are; you are too proud,
But if you were the Devil, you are fair.
Twelfth Night, or What you Will.

Tu legasti il Cor mio con mille nodi
Tu'l formasti di nuovo; e poi che fui
Gentil fatto per te,—rompesti i Lacci.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. III.

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CHAPTER THE EIGHTH.

THE young Countess entered the royal presence with a timidity of which once she had no conception. It was too new to her, not to be painful in a high degree, albeit that grace, which never abandoned her, did on this occasion give to her uncertain step and downcast eye a charm of interest, more fascinating than she had ever been, even in the days of triumph. The Duke of

Laudohn (whom at times I shall continue to speak of as Count Mansfeldt) was standing behind the chair of the Empress. By her side was a young lady, whose lovely face was animated by a smile occasioned by something that Lord Mansfeldt had been saying to the Empress. The conversation was abruptly broken by her half rising from her seat to receive the Duchess of Rhonberg, who, advancing a step before the Duke and Lady Clarenstein, made her salutation. As usual, she received the most flattering reception, which now rendered more pointed that given to her sister-in-law, for the Empress turned not her eye upon her, till the Duke presented her. She then condescended to extend towards her the royal hand, which, with a penetrated air, Lady Clarenstein kissed. The features of the Empress relaxed a little of their severity as she surveyed

the pensive countenance of Lady Clarenstein, and the melting humility and grace which accompanied it. So she said with gentleness, 'I am happy to see you again, Countess.'

Lady Clarenstein again curtsied, and then the Empress presented the Duchess and herself to the Princess who sat by her side, and they took their seats.

There was a time, when the high spirit of Lady Clarenstein would have risen with indignation at being pardoned, however graciously, before the whole Court, immediately under the eye of Count Mansfeldt, who now, by his situation, seemed associated, as it were, to the royal party. Certainly, if in that circle there were any who, for envy of her former charms, or resentment of her

former pride, beheld with secret satisfaction the little scene which had passed before the chair of the Empress, they had a direct triumph over the lovely sister of the Duke of Rhonberg. Yet never perhaps was there seen a description of beauty more captivating, than that which at this moment she presented. Her mournful brow was bound by a pale blue fillet. A faint color in her cheek animated her celestial complexion. The throne of loveliness was half-veiled beneath the rich lace which seemed kept down only by the heavy diamonds which, in form of a dove with outstretched wings, shadowed her bosom. What brilliant purity, what softness without insipidity, what pensiveness without dulness! As you gazed upon her you might ask, 'Is she of earth or heaven?'

The evening was productive of nothing but torment to her. The Duke of Laudohn kept his station by the chair of the Empress, and there seemed to pass between them the most animated conversation. He spoke in a low voice; but, from some words which she overheard, Lady Clarenstein conjectured that he was giving to the Empress a detail of the reception which he had met with from the young Princess, for often expressions of the most graceful and gay cordiality passed between them. The heart of Lady Clarenstein alternately sickened, and beat high, with the pain of suppressed feelings: so new in its influence, so powerful in its effect! Her eyes never raised themselves to Lord Mansfeldt's face; but once as he turned his head to speak to some person behind him, she for an instant contemplated that gracious figure. There was in his

form that combination of contrasted attributes which the Italians call 'il sovra umano.' None of those littlenesses of manner were ever to be seen in him which sometimes break through the most studied and courtly breeding. He was equal, sufficient to himself: full, rich in power and resources: wanting no adventitious lustre to enable him to do all with ease and elevation.—The magnificence of his habit contributed to render more rich in their effect the thick involved clusters of his black hair, which lay in sullen beauty on his temples, and shadowed the glances of his powerful eye! Rose of the world, how blanched the color in thy cheek at sight of this! Hark, he laughs! Oh, how her heart recognised that low half-suppressed laugh! He bends his towering neck to the Empress, he whispers in her ear. She smiles. 'Répétez cela à ma nièce,'

said she aloud. He obeys. He addressed her by the epithet, 'Ma Princesse,' before the Empress. The noble and free address is then authorised by her, since she listens with a smiling air, and regards them alternately, as the Count is speaking, with a look of meaning. All this the mournful Countess beheld from a distant part of the room, whither with some other ladies she had retired to assist at some music which Il Maestro della musica della camera had some time before been preparing for the amusement of the Empress, who was extremely fond of music, and a very excellent judge of that divine art. A card-table was placed before her, and she made a sign to Count Mansfeldt that he was to be one of her partie quarrée at cards, with the Duke of Rhonberg, and another lady. Lady Clarenstein stood at the piano forte, turning over the leaves

of an air, when the Princess came up to her, and gently touched her hand to call her attention. She said with sweetness, 'Charmante Comtesse, je viens vous supplier d'accorder un grand plaisir à l'Impératrice et à moi.'

Lady Clarenstein bowed, and smiled.

'C'est,' continued the Princess, 'que vous me feriez le plaisir de vous entendre chanter? J'adore la musique et j'ai tant entendu parler de la perfection de la vôtre. Veuillez bien, Madame, me faire cette grace.'

'Most certainly,' replied Lady Clarenstein, and curtsying to the Empress, in sign of obedience to her commands, the latter was pleased to say, 'Si cela vous est égal, Comtesse, vous me feriez

un extrème plaisir de me chanter cet air de Guglielmi, 'Confuso, dolente.' Il n'y a rien de plus parfait que votre chant dans cet air. Je n'entends rien de pareil à votre conception du génie de cet air. Viannoni, vous savez que je vous en ai souvent parlé. Cherchez le pour Madame.'

Lady Clarenstein, with a beating heart, said that she 'should be very happy.' To sing that air, in the presence of Lord Mansfeldt, was next to martyrdom. She caught the eye of the Duke. Its expression roused her declining courage. It seemed to say, 'recollect who you are, and in what presence.' So seating herself at the pianoforte, she began the air. A sign from the Empress induced an unbroken silence. Her touch, her voice, were inspiration. The whole power of her soul was concentrated in the sounds she

uttered. Suppression and restraint were forgotten. To sing this air was to express the very words which her heart at that moment would have uttered, and she seemed to be, with an affecting simplicity, careless of all applause, reckless of the effect which she produced. With all the ease of powerful talent, and with that pensive composure which deep sentiment gives to the touch, she struck the rich tenor notes of the recitative. She so exquisitely mingled in the air the wailing notes of languor, with the abrupt and disjointed ones of a delirious despair, that the souls of those who heard her hung upon her voice, and submitted to all the impressions which she produced.

Unhappy Mansfeldt! Ten thousand images rushed before his eyes. Ten thousand thoughts

of love, of broken vows, of eternal renunciation, goaded his heart. It was fortunate for him that the Empress, by laying down her cards, had suspended the game. Forced to behold, to hear her, nay, to hear words so applicable to their own situation, that they almost impelled to his lips an abrupt command to cease, he shuddered as he felt her power yet so strong within him, and if he could, he would have fled from her presence for ever. The song was ended. The Empress said, 'Je vous suis infiniment obligée, Comtesse. Il faut absolument faire entendre cet air à l'Empereur. C'est exquis.—Eh bien, Viannoni, votre Italie produit elle des voix pareilles?'

'Madame, la Comtesse est surement Italienne: si non, elle a emprunté sa voix du Ciel.'

The young Princess was mute with admiration; and taking her by the hand, she pressed it gently, and said, 'Le Duc de Laudohn m'a beaucoup parlé de votre chant, mais je n'attendois pas une telle perfection. Il a cité cet air aussi par excellence. Il aime fort la musique—vous chantez quelquefois pour Monsieur le Duc?'

The Countess bowed. To speak was impossible. Unconscious of the pain which she was inflicting, the Princess went on with that naïveté which made her so interesting. 'Nous avons voyagés ensemble, vous savez, et nous avons beaucoup parlé de Vienne. Je lui fis mille questions. Il raconte si bien, Monsieur le Duc. Il m'a donné tous les détails de la Cour—et j'ai déja reconnu plusieurs personnes que j'ai vues

par les portraits qu'il m'en a fait—vous, par exemple, charmante Comtesse—vous dirai-je ce qu'il m'a dit de vous?'

'If your highness pleases, and you remember.'

'Depuis que je vous vois, je me rappelle tout ce qu'il a dit. Je lui demandois qui etoit la plus belle personne à la cour?—Il a repondu, "La Comtesse de Clarenstein."—"La plus aimée?" c'étoit elle. "La plus recherchée?" encore, et toujours, c'étoit elle. Il a dit aussi que vos manières égaloient en noblesse la beauté de votre personne, que l'une et l'autre réalisoient le beau idéal de la romance, et que—mais il vous dira lui-même. Le jeu est fini. Je lui ferai venir.'

At this declaration, Lady Clarenstein laid her hand on the arm of the Princess, who exclaimed,

in a voice of the sweetest attention, 'Mon Dieu, que vous êtes pâle! vous ne vous portez pas bien—c'est peut-être l'odeur de ces hyacinthes. Passez avec moi dans la chambre voisine. Il y aura du frais.'

Lady Clarenstein recovered herself. She and the Princess returned not into the presence, 'till the Duke of Rhonberg came to tell his sister that they were going. When the Duchess had paid her compliments to the Empress, the latter said, looking on the Princess, 'I shall, with your permission, send this dear child to you to-morrow morning. You will oblige me by letting her be with you constantly, that she may see the rare union of youth and pleasure with the virtues of a riper age.'

The Duchess bent her charming figure. She said every thing that could and ought to be said on so honorable a compliment. The Princess pressed gently the hand of Lady Clarenstein, and said, 'I shall then see you to-morrow; and that will be a great pleasure.'

They then departed. When arrived at the Hotel, Lady Clarenstein wished good-night to the Duke and Hermione, and retired immediately to her chamber.

'Poor Mansfeldt!' exclaimed the Duke, gazing after her as she passed through the long suite of rooms, 'whence comes that new-born grace which strikes directly on the soul—once she was more brilliant than touching.'

'Yes: but the heart teaches many things,' replied the Duchess.

'How she sung—how she looked! Even the Empress was softened.'

'I am glad it is passed,' said the Duchess.

'Yes, as she was distressed, so am I—yet by heaven, 'twas a pleasure, a cruel one perhaps, to me to see her kiss the hand of the Empress, beneath the eye of Mansfeldt—homage done, and pardon granted.'

'My dear Duke, you are—'

'Yes, yes. I know what you mean—unkind.'

'I am sure that the Duke of Laudohn would not have had such a feeling.'

'You mean to say that you love Mansfeldt better than me, I suppose.'

'I think that you are more just than generous to your sister.'

'What imports it now,' said the Duke in a tone of profound melancholy, 'what I think of or feel for her. She regards me as the friend of Mansfeldt and her enemy. That I am not. The greatness of my affection for her, the pride I had in her, makes me now so susceptible of the misery she has caused, that I own I am irritated and offended. When I see her before me, I could clasp her in my arms—absent I behold

her only as the perjured wife of Mansfeldt, and I could execrate at once her matchless graces, and her matchless power.'

CHAPTER THE NINTH.

GENTLE readers, I will not fatigue your patience with the details of all the various trials which the soul of Lady Clarenstein had to sustain in society, meeting now, as she continually did, with the Duke of Laudohn. Oh, how often did those lines of his letter rush into her thoughts, when there passed between them any of those superficial attentions which politeness, cold, general politeness, renders indispensable in the world.

'In the world we may meet again; let never a sign, a look be given, that ever we were to each other affianced and betrothed.' No sign, no look, were ever given. So well did they cover up the mischief that had been done, that no one suspected the ravages that were undermining the constitution of Lady Clarenstein. Lord Mansfeldt, deceived by this false composure, and as much resolved as ever, not to reunite the chain, now broken, which had once bound him to her, maintained in all its force the dignity and sweetness of his manner, and Lady Clarenstein thought that she again beheld him as he had been at Rhionberg when under the impression of Saint Julien's story. In the mean while he was ever of the royal circle, and his actions, though they did not strongly confirm the reports of the projected union between himself and the Princess,

were at least ambiguous to general observation. The young Princess was continually at the Hôtel de Rhonberg. She seemed to feel a strong attachment for Lady Clarenstein. It had all the warmth and sincerity of sixteen. It was impossible not to love the Princess. She was formed to inspire a soft and gentle affection. Her naïveté, her vivacity, formed a beautiful contrast to the exquisite elegance of the noble Clarenstein. The smile of the Princess, when she addressed the 'Lady of Beauty,' as she called her, was full of confidence. Her sylph-like airy figure, which had not yet lost a shade of infantine grace, made her look like an attendant spirit on loveliness, confirmed and chastened into the character of woman.

A painter, beholding her in the presence of the Duchess and Lady Rosamund, might have seized the idea of spring, in its faint and delicate colors, nurtured and brought into perfection and strength, by the protecting care of women, the most accomplished and established in the power of their influence.

The Duke of Laudohn continued to attend the morning circle of the Duchess. He came but for a short time, but he did come, and the young Princess was often there. One morning when he entered, he saw her seated by Lady Clarenstein, who was drawing, watching the lines of her masterly pencil. She called to Lord Mansfeldt to come to them. He obeyed. He went behind the couch, and looked on the draw-

ing. It was a fancy groupe in which the figure of the Princess was introduced.

'Is it like me?' she asked of the Count.

'Very like,' he answered: and together they continued to watch the progress of the groupe.

'Your highness must take off your glove,' said Lady Clarenstein. 'I cannot draw the falcon on your hand without it.'

The Princess obeyed, and discovered the prettiest mignonne hand of the most delicate shape. 'How does one hold a falcon on the wrist?' she said.

'That is not right,' replied Lady Clarenstein. 'Has your Highness never been present at that diversion?'

'No, never. Is this right?'

'No,' said the Count, taking her hand in his, and rounding her wrist, 'you must turn it towards you. If I were a falcon, I should rest there.'

The Princess blushed and smiled. 'Lady of beauty,' she said, 'Is he right?'

'Perfectly. I have sketched it.'

'And the Duke of Laudohn in the shape of a hawk?' . . . said she, laughing.

At that moment, the Duke's children came in, and the Princess arose to go to them, leaving the Duke standing behind the couch. Lady Clarenstein, albeit his presence oppressed her, continued to draw. Not to be silent, the Count said, 'that figure has an incomparable lightness.'

'It is very like the Princess.'

'She seems to do little less than adore you.'

'She is very affectionate.'

'And very impressible. She knows nothing of the world.' The Count, in this speech, was far from intending to make any allusion, but it seemed to her heart as if he had said, 'or she would not attach herself to you.' She leaned back on

the couch, her hand trembled, and her lines became uncertain. The Count heaved a deep sigh, and she became every moment more disordered. Her heart palpitated with a quickened motion, and the throne of loveliness became agitated. No longer able to endure her situation, she threw a shade into the drawing, and gave the Count the tablet. 'It is finished,' she said, 'will you take it to the Princess?' He obeyed. He presented it to the Princess, and hastily left the room. Ah, then the rose of the world languished. Her Sun was set. She had imbibed the light of her life which sustained and consumed her. The day was overcast, and what remained to be spent was dark and desolate.

CHAPTER THE TENTH.

THAT evening the Duchess was slightly indisposed, and it disinclining her to go out, Lady Clarenstein, whose only delight now was that which she received from music, said that she would go to the Opera, and, if Hermione approved, would take her two boys with her. 'I will not be late,' she said, 'and their pleasure will be one to me.'

'Certainly,' replied the Duchess, 'they shall go with you if you wish it. They will be wild with joy.'

The Duke attended his sister to her box, and after sitting for some time with her, went away, saying that he would return before she should wish to go. Lady Clarenstein was desirous not to be seen, or intruded upon, and she placed herself in the back of the box, that she might escape observation, and listen to the music in uninterrupted repose. She believed that no one had seen her enter, but Lord Mansfeldt had done so from the opposite side of the house. Though he meant not to go into her box, yet to be near her was a mournful pleasure that he could not resist. He knew that the next box would be unoccupied, as the Lady to whom it

belonged was in the country. He went into it; flung himself in a chair in the back of the box. The silken curtain, which divided the boxes, permitted him to see partially her figure, and he could hear every thing which the two boys said, who stood in the front of the box, like two little Princes, the admiration of the whole house, and happier far than any one there. Often would the sweet Eugene turn back to caress Lady Rosamund, whose mournful tones fell on the heart of the Count. 'Me is so happy. . . . Me sall come to dear Lady Othamund when she wakes to-morrow morning. . . . Then we will talk . . . . but now me is so pleased.'

The Count's heart envied Eugene, and he lushed at his own weakness. He heard Eugene

say 'Does not Lord Mansfeldt ever come Opera?'

'Yes, very often.'

'Will he come to night?'

'I do not know.'

'Will he come to us?'

'No.'

'Oh me! why not? he never comes to us.'

'He has something else to do.'

'What else?'

'Indeed I cannot tell you . . . see, the dance is begun.'

'Oh Lady Othamund, there is a little boy with wings! who is he?'

'They call him Love.'

'Who is he? do you know him? Oh, how pretty he is!'

'He has got fair hair and blue eyes like you,' said Constantine.

'So he has, I declare! how every body seems to love that little boy . . . He is good then I suppose. Is he, Lady Othamund?'

'Not always. He is naughty sometimes, like all other boys.'

'Oh me! here comes a great tall man with a sword on, and a helmet . . . is he that little boy's father? oh how he kisses him! he is then very good to be sure.'

'That man is like Lord Mansfeldt,' cried Constantine. 'Is he not, Lady Rosamund?'

'Not much.'

'Why he has got black eye-brows, and he holds up his head as Lord Mansfeldt does. I think that he is very like him. He pats the boy on the head, as Lord Mansfeldt does Eugene sometimes.'

'Is it Lord Mansfeldt, Lady Othamund?' asked Eugene.

'No, my sweet boy, certainly not; Lord Mansfeldt is not a dancer.'

'Oh, but he is. Me have seen him dance with you at Onberg on the lawn.'

Lady Clarenstein sighed heavily.

'Oh me, what is that little boy going to do? he has got a bow and arrow like Constantine's. Is he going to shoot? how he goes about and about the tall man!'

'He is going to play him a trick,' said Constantine.

'Now see, he has taken the arrow out of his quiver. Now he is going to let it fly. What will he shoot at, Lady Othamund? . . . see that fine soldier is looking another way. Oh me, if the little boy have not shot his arrow into the man's breast. . . . Wicked little boy! see how he laughs and flies away; oh the poor man, how he is hurt! will no one pull the arrow out for him? . . . oh he will die . . . he will die. . . .

That poor man who is so like Lord Mansfeldt.'

'My love,' said Lady Rosamund, 'do not be unhappy. It is only what you call "make believe." Lord Mansfeldt is not hurt.' Lady Rosamund kissed Eugene.

'*Hurt to death,*' said Lord Mansfeldt to himself.

'Oh I dont think it is "make believe" . . . he seems so hurt . . . what wicked person that is that could hurt Lord Mansfeldt? Is he not, Lady Othamund?'

'Very wicked.'

'Oh how me will hate them.'

'And I too,' said Constantine with vehemence.'

'You must not hate any one.'

'Why not, if they are wicked, and hurt Lord Mansfeldt?'

'Because any one, who is so very wicked as that, must be very unhappy to have done so great a fault, and you should pity him. When you have done wrong, you would not wish your mamma and the Duke to hate you, because they are angry, ———would you?'

'Oh no——but to hurt Lord Mansfeldt is so very, very wicked!' cried Constantine; 'he never hurts any one, not even a little wasp. Dont you remember, Eugene, he would not let me kill a wasp, which had stung him on the hand?'

'Oh yes, me do remember.'

'You know he said that the wasp only stung him, because he hit his hat at it, and it thought he was going to kill it. So he said that the wasp was only defending itself to sting him; and he said that we must never take any thing's life away; and if they were little like wasps, we must not, because we were stronger than it. Was it right in the Count to say that?'

'Very right. Every thing that the Count is right.'

'What, as right as what you and mamma papa say?'

'You must always mind what the Count sa you, my dear boys.'

'Oh yes, we will. But is he so good t Is he proud, Lady Rosamund?' said Con tine.

'No——it is very wrong to be proud.'

'Papa says that I am proud, and that I be tamed as they break a horse. I thought

all people like papa and Lord Mansfeldt were proud.'

'Why, my dear Constantine?'

'Because papa is a Duke.'

'Lord Mansfeldt is a Duke now too,' said Eugene.

'Yes but they say that Lord Mansfeldt is a great man, and that he fights, and that he is the Emperor's favorite.'

'Who told you that, my boy?'

'Oh, Stanberg tells me every thing when he undresses me at night. Stanberg says that he

would die to serve the Count, and so would all his own servants, Stauberg says.'

'And why do you think they love him?'

'Because he is so good to them, I suppose.'

'Yes, certainly: and remember, my dear boy, that it is not because he is a *Duke* that they love him, but because he is kind, and gentle to his inferiors.'

'Yes, I understand that.'

'Oh yes, me have heard Lord Mansfeldt say to his servant, "me will thank you, Brunaut, to do this for me." Now Constantine says to Stanberg, "I will have this—and go, and do that."'

Constantine looked down and blushed.

'That is not right indeed,' said Lady Rosamund. 'Stanberg is your servant, and cant go away from you when you are in a passion, as any one else would do.'

Constantine said that he would not be in a passion with Stanberg any more, and Eugene threw his arms round his brother's neck, and said, 'Oh me did not mean to tell of you; pray do not cry, Constantine. Me did not mean, indeed me did not, to make Lady Othamund angry.'

Lady Rosamund clasped them to her breast. 'You are very good boys, and I love you very much. Constantine, kiss me. I know you will

do like the Count, and take care not to be in a passion again.'

'But what does my father mean by breaking me in, like a horse?'

'He means that you must govern your temper, and not be impatient as you are sometimes; and, if you do this of your own accord, you will not have so many penances as the Duke gives you now, which you do not like.'

'No, I dont like penances—but I hate worse than all, to see my father frown at me. He says that I am an obstinate proud boy, and that he will break my neck, if I am not more humble Indeed I would rather he would knock me down than tell me that I do not care to please him.'

'Does he say so?'

'Oh yes,' went on the boy in great emotion, 'he told me so this morning. Papa has such a terrible look——I was determined, if my heart had burst, I would not cry like a baby 'till he was gone away.'

'You had done something to offend him.'

'Oh yes,' said Constantine sighing, 'I often do that.'

'You must take better care then, my love.'

'Yes. If it would make papa love me as he does Eugene. He always takes him up in his

arms, and he gives me a nod, and says, "well, you proud fellow, are you in, or out of, a passion?'"

The young Countess knew that the Duke was severe with Constantine, and she sometimes feared that the severity which he thought it right to show towards his eldest son, would have on the boy the fatal effect of inspiring him with a fear and undue terror of his presence. 'My dear boy,' said she, 'your father loves you. He thinks you have faults, and he tries to make you sensible of them by his displeasure, because he knows that people who are passionate, are very unhappy in themselves. Are you not unhappy, when you have been in a passion?'

'Yes. I can enjoy nothing. Even if I were not sure to have a penance, I could not laugh

and be happy. I always feel as if no one cared for me then. But I would do any thing to please papa, if I thought that he loved me.'

'He does love you——but not your faults.'

'Oh, I never thought of that. I always thought that I and my stiff neck went together,' said Constantine with a look of mingled archness and intelligence so like the Duke's, that it made Lord Mansfeldt smile. This conversation was interrupted by the door of the box slowly opening, and Lady Clarenstein turning her eye towards it, beheld the Prince di Bronti.

The scene now changed. The Prince, having seen the Duke's servants in the lobby, and learning from them, that Lady Clarenstein was alone

at the opera, had seized with joy this opportunity of finding her unattended, that he might urge his suit, and persecute her into compliance.

Lord Mansfeldt's attention was imperiously attracted by the entrance of the Prince, whom he recognised by his voice. He knew that Lady Clarenstein had rejected his suit, and he feared that his entrance into her box would be displeasing to her. For some time, the low tone in which he spoke, relieved him from his fears. But soon the voice of the Prince became more vehement, and alternately rose in ungoverned passion, and sunk into an importunate supplication.

Lady Clarenstein sometimes answered him with a calmness, that roused his fierce nature to torture. He had the insolence to beseech her to

tell him 'how he was to interpret the distinction with which last year she had honored him?'

Lady Clarenstein said something the Count could not hear, when in fierce retort the Prince replied, 'Have I been your dupe then, madam?' then in a softened tone he said, 'for the love of God, grant me some favor——give me some chance——I will wait——I will do any thing.'

'I will not willingly increase the deception, with which your highness reproaches me. I cannot accept your hand.'

'Yet,' cried the Prince ferociously, 'you *can* love.'

The Count's blood boiled in his veins, as he heard the insolent taunt.

'And this proud hand can be offered, nay, given——and yet relinquished—— Speak—— open your proud lips——say, *can* you love?—— ten thousand curses seize on the man you love!'

'Prince di Bronti,' said Lady Clarenstein with great dignity, 'I am alone—at this moment unprotected—remember that—and insult me no farther.'

'Insult you! Is it insult to say I love, I adore you—I die for you!—what a frown!—— Perchance 'tis an insult to curse, in your presence the man who——who left this hand.'

'Heavens,' said Lady Clarenstein in a voice of suppressed terror, 'what shall I do? unhand me, sir!'

'No, by heaven I will not! what, does the glove resist me too?' cried the Prince, tearing it off with a savage violence. 'No, by heaven, I will not! this hand, whose touch could assuage the torments of the accursed, shall ease mine ——frown if you will——lighten——this shall repay me all!'

Lady Clarenstein uttered a faint cry. Eugene called out, 'oh what shall we do? see, Lady Rosamund is so pale——why do you pull her hand so?'

The Duke of Laudohn walked with grea apparent composure into the box——at sight of him, the Prince cast the hand of Lady Clarenstein from him, and rushed out of the box.

Lady Clarenstein was ready to sink with the excess of her emotion. Lord Mansfeldt, with the benignity of an angel, said, 'I heard the Prince's voice loud as I passed. I trust that he has not dared to hurt you.'

'Oh yes! but he has!' cried Constantine; 'see her hand!'

Lady Clarenstein colored at the insult, and the Count's eyes shot fire, as he saw on it the marks of the savage passion of the Prince.

She stooped to regain her glove, and drew it on. The Count turned away, and, seating himself between the children, relieved her from the embarrassment which they seemed to occasion her.

Lady Clarenstein could not recover herself. Her situation was cruelly distressing. Before her sat the man whom she adored—who now witnessed her humiliation—that man who, in the face of heaven and earth, had received her vows—who had fought to revenge her "faded honor"—who had now come to her relief—who had witnessed the insult which she had received! What a situation!

She sat with downcast eyes. She could not speak her thanks. She was silent—humbled—abashed!

The eyes of the house were directed to the box. The Duke of Laudohn with the nephews of Lady Clarenstein! herself in the box alone!—What does this bode?

Alas! no return, no reconciliation! The common action of humanity, of protection from outrage, had alone brought him there. At length, the Duke came in, and seeing the Count there, he exclaimed with surprise, 'Laudohn!' Then turning to his sister, he said, 'Lady Clarenstein, are you ill? Are you tired? Is any thing the matter?'

'Oh,' cried Constantine, 'the Prince di Bronti came in and frightened Lady Rosamund.'

'And hurt her!' added Eugene, 'and made her very pale—and then Lord Mansfeldt came, and he went away.'

The Duke said hastily, 'perhaps, then, you would like to have the carriage?'

Lady Clarenstein bowed.

'Rhonberg,' said Lord Mansfeldt, 'I will go for it:' and he went.

Lady Clarenstein then told the Duke what had passed. 'I ought not to have left you,' he said.

Lord Mansfeldt came back, and said, that 'the servants were waiting.'

'Mansfeldt,' said the Duke, 'do you sup at Brumaire's to-night?'

'Yes.'

'Is your carriage here?'

'Yes.'

'Then I will but take Lady Clarenstein home: and we will go together, if you will await me here.'

'Certainly I will.'

The Duke gave his sons to their attendants, and drew his sister's arm within his.

'There is no need to go home with me,' she said—'none—pray stay with—'

'You cannot go alone,' said the Duke.

'No, certainly,' cried Lord Mansfeldt impressively, 'after what has passed—'

They went on, 'till they came to the carriage. Lady Clarenstein, then turning to Lord Mansfeldt, curtsied, and said in a voice scarcely audible, 'If I have not yet found words to thank you, it is because I cannot. I beseech your Grace to believe that I am eternally indebted to you.'

The Count bowed profoundly. She stepped into the carriage, and the Duke followed her,

saying, 'My dear Lord, I will be back instantly.'

Lord Mansfeldt's heart beat high. 'What is that curtsy worth, and those dove's eyes, which would make "e'en Gods forsworn?"'

CHAPTER THE ELEVENTH.

'WHAT,' said Lord Mansfeldt to himself, when retired at length from the world, and its noisy, empty pleasure, 'am I sunken so low in honor, that I yet adore a woman I no longer respect, no more esteem: am I become so weak, that I cannot support her presence, nor hear her speak, but that I feel within me the tumults, the conflicts of former days, when I balanced be-

tween love and reason! Cannot she speak, but I am ready to fall down before her? Cannot she but thank me, or pronounce my name, but there is, in the sound, fascination to my ear? Are these my boasted triumphs? Are these the sober thoughts which ought to possess me? Whither is my strength, my honor, my resolution fled? But since it is so, I will not yield basely to the fight. If I cannot nobly conquer, I will fly the powerful danger. I will not see her. I will not go to Rhonberg's: nay, sooner, far sooner, will I exile myself from my country, from friends, from high advancement, than disgrace from passion, all the noble endowments of judgment, of integrity, of liberty, with which heaven has gifted man. Love, without the sanction of these, is hell—with them, a heaven! Oh, Clarenstein, thou woman! Thou true woman! Daughter of seduction and deceit!

made alike to curse, to bless, to exalt, and debase! I know thee now—I know thy sex! Blind fool, to think that an angel's form concealed an angel's soul. Are these, oh God! the beings, which you gave to man, to mitigate the curse that you inflicted on him? Are these the beings, who are to sustain, to cheer the dreary path of man, darkened by thy wrath?' Lord Mansfeldt kept his word. He came not to the Duke of Rhonberg's. He went not where he thought that he could see her; he denied all access to her into his heart; he was resolute in self-denial, and yet the noble lover was wretched,—beyond expression, wretched! The Empress now openly spoke to him of the alliance she projected between himself and the Princess. Had ambition been the ruling passion of his mind, here was completion of the most ardent desire for advancement! He was pene-

trated by the honor done him! He thought the Princess lovely and amiable, and if he had never seen the false Clarenstein, he could have loved her, he could have espoused her. But now his soul recoiled from all union with any of the sex.

'See her;' said the Empress to him, observing the hesitation and embarrassment with which he received the proposal. 'Be with her. Attend her here; at the Duchess of Rhonberg's; wherever else she is, and consult your own judgment. A month hence you shall give me your answer. You have, I presume, no thought of renewing your engagements with the Countess of Clarenstein?'

'I have none.'

'They are absolutely and for ever broken off?'

'For ever.'

'You mean at some time to marry—your youth—your name—'

'I could wish it not to die with me.'

'Can you love the Princess?'

'She is worthy a single, a genuine love, an untainted heart.'

'You could have loved her then, but for—'

'But for that, I could. She is the only woman I ever saw, whom I could love, except—'

'Duke of Laudohn,' said the Empress, with seriousness and affection, 'you are young; you are of a most noble and gallant spirit. You will not let one disappointment sully the bright prospect of a whole life which lies before you. There are affections less transporting, but more solid, and no less dear to the heart of man, than those resulting from the indulgence of a violent and extravagant passion.'

'I know there are, madam; and I would fain recal the time when they sufficed to make me happy.'

'They will again suffice. Your heart will regain its vigor, and fresh joys will spring up there. The title of husband and of father will

be enough for so noble and temperate a nature as your's is.'

The Duke colored at the latter word. He felt that he deserved not the praise, and the Empress, with a smile full of interest, said, 'I meant no reproach. I spoke perhaps more what I expect, than what I see is in you now. I am an old woman, and you may perhaps trust my experience, that marriages are better founded on the sober principles of judgment and reason, than on the wild gusts of a transient passion. I wish to give my niece to you. I know that you will render her happy; the Emperor thinks so too, and we wish at once to draw nearer to us, and to reward, the man who has already done much for our people, and will do more, when the brightness of his powers is no longer held in obscurity

by an unworthy love for a woman, whose powers of fascination are not equalled by her virtues. Will you oblige me by doing as I requested you?'

The Duke fell at her feet, and kissed the hand of the Empress without speaking!

'I take,' she said, 'your silence for assent. Adelaide of course is ignorant of our design. You will be cautious, young Lord. Do not, before your resolution is established to make her your wife, do aught that shall win her favor—that blush, indeed, becomes you. But you *must* know that you are formed to inspire attachment in the sex, and play not with the power that you possess. You are our dear and much-honored soldier—the man on whom the Emperor's love

and high esteem do rest, as on a pillar of the state. Rise, my good Lord. Reflect on what I have imparted to you. It is by the Emperor's command, that I have discoursed with you as I have done.'

'Madam,' cried the Duke, 'I must *die* for you. I cannot repay all this goodness but with my life.'

'Live for us, and employ your life in our service. You shall pay to us the price of what we give, if the debt oppress you.'

'It does not oppress me, gracious madam; for to such givers, gratitude is a happy and joyous feeling. The price I can never pay—but mark my *sense* of it. I can and will. Next to

heaven, you shall have my duty, and service, and truth, 'till death dissolve all human ties.'

After a silence of a few moments, the Duke prepared to leave the royal cabinet, when the Empress said, 'You will be here this evening, Duke?'

He bowed.

'And,' continued the Empress, 'to amuse my dear child, I give her to-night a ball—my hours, you know, are early.'

'I will most certainly attend the Princess,' said the Duke; and he left the cabinet.

Thus, in pursuance of the Empress's commands, and urged by his own resolution to avoid the sight of Lady Clarenstein, the Duke of Laudohn became a stranger at the Hotel de Rhonberg. A fortnight thus elapsed: the cloud which hung over that noble house grew darker, and thickened into a settled gloom. The countenances of its members were no longer irradiated by happiness. The Duke was thoughtful and retired. Confidence and intimacy between him and Lord Mansfeldt had suffered a suspension. The report of his marriage every-where prevailed. Anxiety, fear, suspense, filled their breasts—they waited in a dead calm, as it were, the approach of some dreadful storm.

The Duke had not seen Lord Mansfeldt for many days. Returning, one evening, late from a

party where he had supped, he went to his Hotel and inquired if Lord Mansfeldt were at home. He was answered in the affirmative. His Grace, he was told, had not been out since morning, and he was not retired to rest.

The Duke went on alone to his chamber. Lord Mansfeldt was seated at a table, writing. On seeing the Duke, he looked surprised, and said something about the lateness of the hour. 'It is the first moment I could call my own to-day. I have been at the Palace, where I expected to see you.'

'I had business which prevented me,' Lord Mansfeldt replied, 'or I should have been there.' There was a pause of some moments. 'I have had so much trouble with these papers.'

'Why,' said the Duke abruptly, 'have you ceased to come to me?'

'I cannot come to your house. Is the Duchess well?'

'She is; but she is out of town since yesterday with her aunt.'

'You look harassed, Duke——You are not ill?'

'No—but I may well look what I am—*harassed*. There is disunion in my family—our peace is broken. I am the most unhappy man on earth, to see—'

'No,' cried Lord Mansfeldt, 'that title is mine. A more unhappy man exists not than myself.'

The Duke sighed heavily.

'We talk of prudence, of reason, of self-denial and we die in the conflict. We boast of strength and we are the slaves of passion! Phantoms of glory! There is alienation, there is disunion in your family, and I am the cause. Oh, would to God that I never, with my unhappy love, had entered your house. The friendship between you and your sister is broken.'

'Alas! my brother—my noble Raymond!'

'Duke, be cautious. Stretch not the bow too tight. Show no severity to your sister for my sake—She loves you.'

'Aye, as she loved you, perhaps.'

'Oh, better, better far!'

'She has disunited us. The friend of my soul is no longer mine. He comes not beneath my roof. He confides no more in me. I cannot forgive her.'

Lord Mansfeldt walked up and down the room in great disorder.

'Rhonberg, you are wrong. Know you what passes in your sister's mind?'

'No; our confidence is broken up.'

'Have a care what you are doing!' said Lord Mansfeldt vehemently. 'By heaven, there is something on her mind. There is a smile, a dejected smile. Oh, if I were her brother, and saw that smile before my eyes, and knew that my alienated affection brought it there!'

'An injury to myself I could have pardoned.'

'Oh, would the earth would cover me up for ever! You make my life hateful to me. Be reconciled to your sister, Rhonberg. I do implore it of you. I would ask it on my knees.'

A great noise below interrupted Lord Mansfeldt's generous address to the brother of

ady Clarenstein. A servant rushed into the oom.

'What's the matter?' cried the Duke.

'My Lord, my Lord, the Hotel de Rhonberg in flames.'

'The Countess!——My children!——'

'My Lord, I saw the Countess—it was she ho sent me hither in search of you. William is me to the Palace. The fire is in the left pavi-on, where the Countess sleeps.'

With the speed of lightning, the Duke and ord Mansfeldt traversed the streets. They ished through the crowd which filled the courts

of the Hotel, and were in the great hall which separated that pavilion from the body of the house, and here the flames burst on their sight. The confusion was dreadful. Part of the grand staircase was fallen in. Many of the Duke's friends were there, giving directions to the people, who with water tried to keep down the flames. The Duke called aloud. His voice was scarcely heard. He beheld Constantine in the arms of his preceptor. 'Eugene,—the Countess!' was all that the father, in breathless agony, could say. The Duke's friends gathered round him. 'Where,' cried he, 'is my son—the Countess? They are not here!'

'Lady Clarenstein, in spite of human effort to prevent her, is flown to the rescue of Eugene

She is above in the chambers—the staircase gave way—it cut off the possibility of following her.'

The Duke uttered a dreadful cry. To mount the staircase was impossible. Round the hall hung a gallery which led to the chambers—but no ladder was at hand, and the height was too great to admit of gaining it by that means—what relief?—what resource? The Duke was rushing from the hall to endeavor their rescue from the southward avenues of the Hotel, when a sudden shout echoed throughout the hall, 'My Lord, your sister—your son!'

Every eye was raised; and rushing along the gallery, like an angel in the midst of death and horror, Lady Clarenstein was seen bearing Eugene in her arms. She came to the front of the

gallery, and stopped. It was affecting to hear her soothing the terrified boy who clung round her neck, and saying repeatedly, 'Your father is there, and he will take you.' Then she bound his eyes with a handkerchief, that he might not see what she prepared to do, which was to lower him down over the gallery by means of a long scarf, which fortunately at that moment she had round her. This being several yards in length, she now fastened one end of it round the waist of Eugene, and holding the other end firm round her arm, she let him down by degrees. She saw that those below, comprehending her design, prepared to receive him. The Duke took him, and threw him into the arms of his servants, and Lady Clarenstein, beholding him unhurt, threw up her hands to heaven, and blessed it.

'But thou, my sister!' cried out the Duke in an agony, not seeing the possibility for her to descend from the same height. To attempt passing the staircase was equally perilous. It was the only way, however, by which she could save herself, and she resolved to attempt it. Soon every heart was agitated with unspeakable apprehension, as they saw the sister of the Duke planting her foot on the broken steps which projected from the wall, every moment in peril of her life, and surrounded by flames. A dreadful silence prevailed. Terror held them mute. Nothing was heard but the crackling of flames, or the crash of some part of the staircase which every moment fell in. Now the clouds of smoke concealed her from their view, now again they partially behold her. Those who were below tried to keep down the force of the fire by deluges of

water. Many a noble hand worked that night the work of slaves, and not a man, however obscure, was there, that did not put up a prayer for the preservation of the heroic sister of the Duke. As to him and Lord Mansfeldt, they set their lives on hers. They cast the water on the flames with the strength of giants. Once Lord Mansfeldt grasped the Duke's hand, and said, 'Now wilt thou say that she loves thee not?' The Duke shuddered. 'The flames have noble food—but, by heaven, if she escape not, they shall have more of the race!'

Suddenly a shriek was heard. 'Cast the water on me, or I die!' exclaimed Lady Clarenstein. A dreadful crash followed these words. A cloud of dust and smoke filled the hall. It dispersed, and they beheld, oh sight of horror mixed with

beauty, oh image of heavenly shape encompassed by destruction! the Countess trembling on the edge of the last step, which overhung the height below. A thousand voices called to her to descend, to jump down. Lord Mansfeldt's eyes were fixed on the step. Suddenly he called out in a voice of thunder, 'The step is falling, throw yourself on that statue.' She obeyed that voice. She sprung upon the pedestal of a statue that stood by the staircase, and clinging round it with her arms, hung there for safety. A moment after, the whole of the staircase gave way with a frightful crash.

Nearly as lifeless as the image on which she hung, now, for the first time, terror completely possessed her. Her courage failed. In vain they called out to her to precipitate herself from that

dreadful situation. They came beneath, and spread their arms to receive her. But a panic had seized her. Their voices confounded her. Her limbs lost their power. Her eyes became dim. Her blood ran shivering through her veins. She uttered a plaintive cry. She beheld Lord Mansfeldt. She said faintly, 'My Lord, can you do nothing for me! My strength is gone.' Down on the earth Lord Mansfeldt threw himself. He lifted up his hands to her. He said distinctly, 'I can do nothing. Preserve yourself, you may, you can! Cast yourself down. Do it for the love of God!'

Oh, Love, what is thy power, that even in the midst of danger and death thou canst give to the soul a gleam of heavenly joy? The voice, the posture, the eye of Lord Mansfeldt, broke the

spell which held her. Her hands unloosed their hold, and down from the height she sprung, fell into their arms, and fainted.

The Duke carried his sister out of the hall. He bore her to the chamber of the Duchess, and laid her on the couch; summoned the women, whom fear had dispersed, and surrendered her to their cares. They watched in intense anxiety the progress of her recovery. Her insensibility continued, in spite of all the remedies that they tried to restore her. The women, alarmed, cried out that she was certainly 'dead.' At that dreadful word, Lord Mansfeldt, who had not penetrated beyond the threshold of the chamber, rushed into it, and cast himself beside her. It was in vain to oppose him. Love and terror had thrown him into a mighty tumult, and imperious passion

heard no voice but its own. 'My God, my God,' he cried, 'restore her. Let me see those eyes unclose—not a pulse—not a breath—her heart does not beat—was that look the last?'

'Dear Mansfeldt,' said the Duke, 'be calm. Recollect yourself, I conjure you.'

'Where,' cried the unheeding Mansfeldt, 'where was my worthless arm, that could do nothing? Is this a form to encounter death? Sweet Lady, beloved, adored, thy courage has cost thee thy life! Take mine. Inhale the life of a wretch whose soul is not his own, but thine—thine now, and for ever!'

The heart of the Countess fluttered with a faint pulse. She sighed. 'She breathes!' cried

Lord Mansfeldt, springing from the bed. 'She will revive. She will live!' and he fled into the darkest part of the room. There he listened to every sound which issued from the alcove, and shuddered with horror at the scene which had passed. At length, unclosing her eyes, Lady Clarenstein faintly said, 'Brother!' The Duke went to her. She said something in a murmuring plaintive voice expressive of pain. She seemed bewildered and confused; and, by degrees, as her senses returned, and she recollected all that had passed, she uttered a sudden cry. 'Eugene,' she exclaimed, 'where is he? oh, he has perished in the flames!'

The Duke assured her that he was safe; and to convince her of it, he sent for him, and put him into her arms.

'Thou little angel!' she said, overwhelming him with caresses, 'thou little angel, *twice saved*. Art thou unhurt, dear boy? perfect and lovely as before?' She paused a moment; then turning to the Duke, in a solemn tone she said, 'My Lord, look on your son, and if to me, next to heaven, you feel gratitude for his life, restore now to me your wonted kindness, restore to me the true affection of a brother—such affection as I had from *you*, ere the peace of your noble friend was injured.'

She ceased. Lord Mansfeldt shuddered. The Duke bent his forehead on his sister's bosom.

'Thou hast it all! Till death separate us, I am, heart and soul, devoted to thee! Forgive my past unkindness!'

'Enough!' said Lady Clarenstein calmly, 'I am satisfied. And thou angel child shalt live and florish, and bear witness to thy beloved father, at what a mighty price I set his dear affection—that inspired, that upheld me! not less impelled could I have found such unnatural strength—for I am by nature weak, fearful—Now go, sweet boy—take him from me. I am faint again—Brother,' cried she, casting herself on the Duke's breast, 'save me! My head becomes giddy—the room turns round—Where am I?—Alas, I die!'—

In fact, as Lady Clarenstein herself had said, it was an unnatural strength that had sustained her; and now, shuddering at the images which floated before her eyes, all the woman came upon her.

Lord Mansfeldt fled precipitately from the chamber. He saw the physicians enter as he left it. They relieved the Duke from a world of anxiety. Lady Clarenstein was but slightly burnt. They administered to her an opiate which soon lulled her into a sweet repose. Ordering her to be kept in profound quiet, they left her, assuring the Duke that there was nothing to apprehend from any injury that she had sustained from the fire.

The Duke, relieved from his fears, now went to his friends. The fire was extinguished, and they all crowded around him to congratulate him, and to inquire after Lady Clarenstein and his son. The expressions of enthusiastic admiration which they used, affected the Duke deeply. He assured them that she was well, and composed,

and he expressed his thanks to them for the service they had rendered him that night. He informed himself of the occasion of the fire, which had arisen from a stove beneath the staircase. It had been discovered by Lady Clarenstein herself, who had immediately given the alarm; and had, as already related, so heroically gone to the rescue of Eugene, who slept near her own apartments. The damage done was slight. The Duke greatly lamented that several of his own servants were much burned by the falling in of the staircase, as they attempted to follow the steps of Lady Clarenstein. The Duke's friends now left him, and went to spread over the whole city the interesting scene which they had beheld that night. Lord Mansfeldt had long retired to his own house.

The Duke, at length alone, went to watch the slumbers of his sister in an adjoining chamber. He prostrated himself before the throne of heaven, and poured out the deep gratitude of his heart. Part of the night he spent thus, and part in recalling the affecting address of his sister to himself. 'What! am I then to learn,' cried he, 'that she is wretched?'

The Duke dispatched a courier to Hermione, and after detailing to her the event of the night, he concluded with these words, 'Return to us, my dear Duchess. Bring your gratitude to our dear sister; for if you embrace both your children, it is to her courage that you owe the blessing.'

The Duchess returned. Those who know what a mother's feelings are, may imagine hers,

when, clasped to the bosom of the Duke, he presented to her eyes Constantine and Eugene. She flew into the arms of Lady Rosamund, and when she could speak, she said, 'I loved you before as my own sister. I scarcely believed that you could be more to me than you ever were—now I can find no words—but this I know, that I should never have raised my head again if he had perished.'

'Beloved sister!' said Lady Rosamund, 'you have a son preserved, and I have gained a brother. The Duke is again my friend, therefore I am repaid tenfold.'

Thus ended this scene of conflicting passions. To the heart of Lady Rosamund alone it brought a gleam of peace.

The doors of the Hotel were besieged by inquirers after her for several days. The Princess came often to visit her. The destined bride of Lord Mansfeldt, lovely and amiable in herself, by her presence gave many a pang to her soul. For even in her dreams she beheld the form of Mansfeldt, she heard his voice, she saw him as he was, when casting himself on the earth before her, he had implored her for the love of God to save herself. 'Alas!' she cried, 'why said he not for his own? What is life but a lingering death to me?'

A few days after this event, the Duke was seen one morning coming out of his sister's chamber, his countenance greatly agitated, and his eyes moistened with tears. He entered his own apartment, where he shut himself up for many hours,

and no one presumed to interrupt a retreat, which the marks of sorrow with which he seemed oppressed, rendered sacred to all his house.

Lady Clarenstein had opened her whole soul to him. Astonishment, pity, and admiration, alternately strove in the bosom of the Duke. Awakened now, by the knowledge of her situation, to solicitude and affection, he trembled alike for her life and her repose: the wrongs of Lord Mansfeldt in some sort faded from his mind.

The Duke's pride of family was great: his ideas of female honor were high-toned, and as delicate as those of the Countess herself. He would have recoiled with a noble reserve, no less strong than her own, from the idea of even breathing to Lord Mansfeldt the most distant hint of

the dreadful extent to which he was beloved. Lady Clarenstein had said to him, 'but that I know the temper of your mind, and am most assured that you would sooner see me die, than disclose to Lord Mansfeldt the passion which consumes me, eternal silence should have sealed my lips: therefore I ask no promise from you to keep secret the confidence which I repose in you.'

The Duke shuddered as he recalled the firmness of eye and voice with which she had spoken these words. 'But how then is she to live?' cried the Duke, 'what is to restore her? With all that delicacy of mental organisation, how is she to bear up against the insidious undermining influence of a hopeless passion? Something she let fall of a desire to revisit Hungary. Perhaps

it is her wish to leave Vienna. We will depart together: I will travel with her, go with her to the world's end, if that will restore her peace.'

The Duke returned to his sister, and imparted to her this design. She threw herself on his neck, and accepted the kindness as a blessing from heaven. 'I feel,' she cried, 'strong in hope, since you are with me. My soul is lightened of half its woes since you return. I am no longer desolate—but here I cannot stay—to see Lord Mansfeldt, before my eyes, espouse the Princess Adelaide——but the Duchess?'——

'Believe me,' said the Duke eagerly, 'that the Duchess, distressed as she is at your situation, will promote, with all the generosity of her nature, any plan that will relieve you from

pain. Besides, she can at any time join us if we find that peace revisit thy heart—but I will bring her to you, and she shall speak for herself.'

The Duchess came and folded her sister in her arms. 'Beloved sister,' she said, 'go with my consent and blessing. I will sacrifice the Duke's presence for years, if it will restore you to happiness; and I do not hesitate to approve and urge your immediate departure.'

'If it were not,' said Lady Clarenstein, laying her hand on her heart with an affecting solemnity, 'if it were not with me life or death, this sacrifice should not be made. There is a mortal pain here that preys on my life. What I could do, I have done, to sustain existence—the rest is in the hand of God: if he heal me not—' She paused. The

Duchess wept, and her brother looked at her and trembled.

'Whither will you go?' said at length the Duchess.

'To Switzerland—to Geneva,' replied the Duke. 'Shall it be so, beloved?'

'It is equal to me,' she said; 'to Switzerland let it be.'

'We will not delay,' said the Duke.

'Do with me what you will. Take me, guide me. Govern my soul, my thoughts.'

'Alas! that I could!' thought the Duke.

Their departure was fixed for the end of the following week. Every thing was arranged by the Duke for her accommodation and pleasure, that the most careful and tender anxiety could suggest. It was a necessary form to wait on the Emperor, and request his permission to travel. The Duke accordingly waited on him, and received the royal consent, given not without some expressions of surprise. The Duke simply gave as the reason, the wish of Lady Clarenstein to make the tour of Switzerland that summer.

Many conjectures were however made, as to the object of this sudden departure, and no one was more astonished at it, than he who was himself the cause of it.

After the event of the fire, the Duke, feeling the impossibility under which the confidence of his sister laid him, to speak with openness to Lord Mansfeldt on the subject of his domestic grievances, studiously avoided being alone with him. A few words only passed between them, on the Duke's intended departure. A coldness, induced on each side by intense feeling, so operated on them both, that their words were guarded and reserved. Lord Mansfeldt asked how long he should be absent.

'It depends wholly on the Countess. If she finds it as agreeable to her as I hope she will, it will probably induce me to reside some time in Switzerland;—in which case, the Duchess will join us.'

'It will then probably be many months ere I see you again—years, perhaps?'

The Duke hesitated. He seemed to have something on his lips, and in his heart, to say. It transpired only in this cold and measured phrase, 'When I return, I trust that I shall find you happy.' Lord Mansfeldt smiled mournfully. The Duke went on, 'perhaps a husband and a father. I wish you every good,' and the Duke pressed Lord Mansfeldt's hand.

'I thank you, Rhonberg,' he calmly answered.

'I shall hear from you, Raymond?'

'If you desire it.'

'If I desire it?'

Lord Mansfeldt returned the pressure of the Duke's hand, bowed his head, and turned to leave him.

'Mansfeldt,' cried the Duke in violent emotion.

'What would my friend?'

'But implore you to believe that I am wretched, thus to part from the man whom my soul honors.'

Lord Mansfeldt embraced the Duke. 'No more, my noble friend. Embarrass not yourself —we part friends. God bless you. May he

prosper this journey, and make it answer the
for which it was no doubt designed.'

The Duke's affections were strong. He
Lord Mansfeldt depart with a grief that ba
his force to conceal. He shut himself up ir
own apartment, and there bitterly deplored
peace which he thought lost to his family for e

CHAPTER THE TWELFTH.

ALTHOUGH the Duke of Laudohn could not but be certain that the restoration of the health of Lady Clarenstein was the motive of this journey, yet he was far from conceiving the slightest suspicion of the cruel cause by which it had been injured. Nothing had ever passed beneath his eye that could have authorised him to think himself beloved by her; and though he believed that

she regretted, for honor and virtue's sake, the part she had played, yet he never dreamt of the true state of her mind, and believed himself to be unregretted, unthought of, unheeded. The new-born disaffection of the Duke's conduct towards himself, he imagined to be the result of a combination of feelings which had more of pride in them than of sensibility. He felt as if the chain which united him to the family of Rhonberg was every day loosened; and he experienced all those cruel and disheartening feelings which belong to a friendship that slowly and gradually decays, not from any one cause that we can fix on, but which grows daily weaker and weaker, wanting the natural heat and nourishment of confidence, intercourse and disclosure of intimate thought and feeling. Thus the Duke of Laudohn, deceived alike, as he believed, in love and friend-

ship, shut up within his own noble breast the regret and anguish that he endured—a deep melancholy fell on him, and he was supported only by that magnanimity with which adversity had armed him against suffering. He sought not to meet Lady Clarenstein before her departure, and in this he was spared the torture of a harassing and conflicting resistance, as she went out nowhere.

Sunk in passive obedience, she had given herself up to the Duke's guidance. She expressed no wish, no choice, no desire. Firmly convinced that she should never return, and worn out with suffering, the lighter emotions which would have affected one happier in mind than herself, on leaving the scene of four years' joy and brilliant happiness, passed over her mind, and left no feel-

ing there. To have seen the calm composed look with which she received the compliments of all her friends on her departure, one might have thought her wanting in natural sensibility.

Little was said, between the Duchess and herself, of the projected departure; the former behaved like an angel, making the sacrifice to which she had consented, with tears in her eyes, and a smile on her lips, expressive of her hope and expectation that all would, ere long, be well. For this ready compliance, the Duke adored her; it impressed on the heart of Lady Clarenstein a deep and lasting gratitude. But there was yet reserved for her a cruel blow, to be given by an adored hand. Not thus placid, tranquil and unagitated, was she permitted to pass. The vengeance of Love pursued her, and gave to her

already lacerated bosom, a wound that tore open afresh every source of former anguish. The noble and wretched lovers were doomed to meet; and the caution that each employed to avoid the other, unlucky chance rendered vain. Thus it was.

On the eve of her departure, Lord Mansfeldt paid the Duke a short visit: as he was retiring from him, he passed through that corridor which had once been the scene of a frantic passion. His eyes bent on the earth, he went on, breathing blessings from his beating heart, on her whom he sought not to meet, and in secret only languished after and adored, when suddenly he heard a light step slowly pacing along. He lifted up his eyes, and saw advancing the fatal object of a boundless and eternal affection. Her head

was bowed down, and bent to the ground. A breeze, as she passed, unfolded a loose robe of satin which she wore; and, shivering with cold, she wrapped it closer around her. What an image of beauty and desolation, of delicacy and drooping loveliness! She advanced, unconscious and unheeding of his presence, 'till, on turning round one of the large columns, she saw him: she started: she had not power to speak. At length, he summoned up all his force, and said gently, 'You go to-morrow?'

'Yes,' she faintly answered. 'Does your Grace want to see the Duke?'

'No. I have seen him—Is it your wish to leave Vienna?'

She bowed her head.

'I thought that you were happy here?' It was impossible to answer him.

'Wherever you go,' in a trembling voice, said he, 'may you find happiness and restoration to perfect health!'

'Indeed I thank your Grace for that wish.'

Lord Mansfeldt held out his hand. She placed hers in it. 'God bless you!' he said.

The heart of Lady Clarenstein could not stand this. She wrung her hands. Nature and Love annihilated the cold forms which restrained their feelings, and, the barrier once passed, those feel-

ings dictated the language of truth and agony. Lord Mansfeldt's eyes were fixed on her face. Long she endured the gaze, then exclaimed, 'Be merciful, and curse me rather! Take those eyes from off me! I know, I know what I have done!'

'No, no, no,' cried Lord Mansfeldt, 'you cannot know. No woman's thought can pierce such depth of disappointment.'

'Then do not bless me. Curse me as I merit!'

'Curse thee!' cried Lord Mansfeldt, drawing her on his bosom, and leaning over her drooping head, 'yes, Curses such as heaven

gives its angels—as mothers give their children,—as men give their brides—so I curse thee!'

There was something in the low and solemn tones of his voice, that chilled the blood in her veins, and down at his feet she sunk, and twice she uttered the word 'pardon.' He raised her up . . . he kissed her forehead, and said, 'do not do this to me . . . Why did you break your vows? Why did you play thus with my forbearance . . . what cause, what motive? Hadst thou one? Oh, speak if thou canst? The universe for a word!'—She was silent.

'Oh, if thou hast that word to speak, it were but justice to yourself, mercy to me, to speak it. I cannot but think that it was not wholly wanton pride, and wild caprice. Surely, you loved me

once. Why then break your vows even in the very front and fire of my love? oh speak—— Make it but possible for honor to forswear itself, and I will fall down and worship thee!'

Lady Clarenstein felt at that moment as if her heart had suffered the withering touch of death. She had now need of all her force to enable her to resist the temptation to speak—not to utter the secret which was on her lips—and sacrifice at once her promise given, and the honor of the Prince di Bronti. She turned away her head. The Count's eyes became disturbed, and something like indignation trembled in his voice. 'Alas!' he cried, 'it was because I was never beloved! I would have lived in poverty and obscurity with thee! I would have toiled for thee, bled for thee, died for thee! but thou didst

never love me! Traitress! dost thou remember the eve of our departure from Rhonberg? where are the vows thou gavest me then?—where my bridal hour?'

Not to behold the anguish of the Count's face, Lady Clarenstein closed her eyes, and tears fell down her cheeks. Her heart was breaking. She lay on his arm half-fainting, passive though tortured. She wished that there she might die.

'Tears!' he cried. 'Perchance you pity me! you did not guess, it may be, the mischief that you wrought upon me.——— Clarenstein, Bride, Betrothed! what hast thou done?' he hid his face on her bosom, and burning tears bathed it. He shook in the agony of his soul. She

roused her fleeting spirits, and gently put him away. The Count's reason seemed to have fled. 'I cannot, cannot give thee up!' he muttered with a suppressed vehemence.

'Mansfeldt!' she faintly cried. He lifted up his head; 'what sayest thou?' he breathed forth in a tone of such ineffable tenderness, that she burst into a dreadful passion of tears. 'Speak,' he cried, 'speak my name again. 'Tis long since I have heard thee call me.'

'Leave me, oh leave me!'

'Why do you shrink away from me as if my touch were torture? once you loved me——at least you made me think so. It *was delusion* indeed. But I was happy.'

'Merciful heaven!' exclaimed Lady Clarenstein, 'can this be borne?'

'Beloved! how shall I live? how shall I breathe when you are gone? you know that I am a wretch, who has now no joy on earth!'

'Leave me, for the love of God!'

'No, no,' cried Lord Mansfeldt madly, 'no, no, I will not. You are mine. You gave yourself to me. I am your husband by the laws of God and man——oh let me be happy still!'

'Spouse of the Princess Adelaide,' cried Lady Clarenstein in a loud voice, 'unclasp me!'

The sound went to Lord Mansfeldt's heart, as if a thunderbolt had struck him. His reason returned. He covered his face with his hands, and groaned aloud. Lady Clarenstein dragged her fainting steps away. Her hand was on the door, when she heard him say, 'Lady Clarenstein!'

She turned gently her head. 'What would my Lord?'

He sunk on his knees. He bowed his head between his hands. He said, 'to offend is dreadful to me. I knew not what I did. Part not in anger from me.'

'Alas! that posture should be mine, and those words too!' then in an exalted tone, which seemed

to gather force and energy from despair, she said, 'Forget, renounce me! call up to memory my broken faith, my false, vain, deceitful conduct! think on your own nobility of soul, on the weak and frivolous nature of mine. Then balance in the scale thy deserts and mine, and remember that I am unworthy to be matched with thee! we are indeed disunited for ever. I also know what honor and glory are. Thou art the express image of both, and thou shalt not dishonor thyself for me. But since thou lovest me still, no more my presence shall vex and gall that noble spirit. I cannot live where thou dost inhabit. Farewell! ——Nay, come not near me. Approach me not. Not again the torture of those arms will I endure. Farewel, lord, lover, husband! titles which once were thine! now to me thou art——' Lady Clarenstein paused, looked at the Count, threw

up her hands and her eyes to heaven, and, slowly retiring, murmured as she went—'the angel of death, I think—for thou wilt surely bear my soul from earth!'

Lord Mansfeldt's brain was on fire, and his soul seemed to melt with her faint and dying tones. He heard nothing distinctly but the word 'death.' He shuddered. An icy chill shivered through his veins. He started on his feet, and left the house.

The next morning, at an early hour, the carriages came to the door, into one of which the Duke lifted his sister half lifeless, sprung into it himself, and pulled up the blinds, that no eye might see her. The servants mounted their

horses, and followed them. The gates closed. Lady Clarenstein lay on the Duke's breast. She never spoke, neither did she weep, nor return her brother's caresses. They passed the Hotel of the Duke of Laudohn; the great, the honored, the idol of fortune, Mansfeldt! Had the wretched Clarenstein known that he, at that moment, lay extended on his bed in a burning fever, and the powers of his reason suspended, it would perchance have ended at once her sorrows and her shame. But this blow she was spared.

She went to a foreign country in the vain hope that other scenes would drive the torturing image from her breast. She went to draw in a renovated life beneath other suns. Vain hope! fruitless endeavor! what clime can cheer a broken

heart? what sun can warm the chill of despair? where is the spot on this wide earth where care cannot pursue her?

CHAPTER THE THIRTEENTH.

human cares alone could have healed the
en heart of the Countess, it would have beaten
with healthful vigor; for never did one, who
the name of brother, combine together such
ers of tenderness, reason and eloquence. No
precepts, no common-place arguments, no
parisons of her situation with that of others,
rom his lips. These may silence complaint,
lid they ever console a wounded spirit? he

spoke in a loftier tone. He pressed the duty of submission on her mind. He presented to her eyes views of life grand and enlarged—pointed out the various walks, in which a character that enjoys a liberty from passion, may move with honor and contentment—he urged her to consider the high endowments with which heaven had personally gifted her; of the power which fortune had placed in her hands, to enjoy every delight that the world can give, and to draw around her a circle, into which all who entered might partake of those blessings with her. From the sublime scenes of nature, as they are to be found in that country through which they passed, he often gathered images of greatness and beauty, which rendered more impressive the eloquence of truth; and sometimes it suspended her sorrows, it cheated awhile the poignancy of her grief: but

the night undid what the day had done, for then he gave her up to solitude and tears, and each succeeding morn, he received into his arms a wan, dejected form of fading loveliness.

Thus they traveled through the greatest part of Switzerland. The weather was uninterruptedly fine. They frequently spent the whole day in the open air. Wherever a beautiful, a retired spot presented itself to their eye, there the Duke pitched his tent beneath the shade of the trees. Here the Countess found every luxury, and every comfort, that she would have had in her own cabinet—her books, her work, her pencil, and if she wished for music, two of the Duke's servants, who played well, and who, for his amusement, had been excellently well taught, came beyond the curtains of the tent, and played some of those

wild and national airs of the country, which Lady Clarenstein passionately admired. Sometimes the Duke read aloud to her, and his low and sonorous voice beguiled her oft-times of thought. When thus the day was spent, the tent was struck, and they went on in the dusk of the evening to the resting-place of the night, which often afforded but a mean accommodation to such illustrious travelers; but provided that there was a room where the bed of the Countess could be put up, the Duke was satisfied. For his own accommodation he cared not. Every morning he questioned her woman how she had rested, and from Helene, he received every intelligence, as she slept always at the feet of her mistress's bed.

One morning she came out to him as he was walking before the door of the rustic inn, with so

sad a countenance and an air so languid, that he, in a tone of alarm, inquired if she were ill. 'No,' she said, 'I am not more ill than usual.'

'Have you slept?' he asked.

She threw herself on his neck, and wept. 'Let us go from this place,' she said.

'Why are you in such haste, beloved? I thought that here perhaps you would like to spend some hours. It is a lovely spot!'

She cast a vague dejected look around her. 'Yes,' she said, 'it is lovely—but what is to me the loveliness of nature? there peace, and harmony, and order reign. Rest for me there is none!'

The Duke kissed her cheek. 'Rosamund, you rend my heart——why to-day such unusual melancholy? last night you were almost cheerful.'

'Whilst you are with me——but alone I suffer—perhaps I shall be better when I am at Geneva—Shall we be there to-day?'

'Oh no, my beloved; that is impossible. 'Tis three days' long journey to Geneva.'

Lady Clarenstein seemed oppressed with a cruel restlessness. A feverish heat was in her cheek. Every moment, as they traveled, she urged the Duke to increase the speed with which he drove his horses, as if by the rapid motion, she could escape from herself. The Duke

turned away his head, and the tears started into his eyes.

This restlessness was succeeded by a deep languor. She sunk back in the carriage, and spoke not. Her eyes wandered over the country through which they passed, without observing any thing, and when the Duke at heat of noon-day stopped his horses, and proposed to her to alight and take some refreshment by the side of a forest not far off, she assented, and seemed now as passive, as a few hours before she had been anxious to proceed. They alighted. The attendants spread carpets on the ground, and prepared every thing for their refreshment. Lady Clarenstein, fatigued, asked for her women. The Duke sent them to her, and while they were arranging things about her, that she might take

some repose, he, thoughtful and distressed, walked away into the forest. The little success that attended his cares, wounded his heart. He saw her drooping daily beneath his eye, suffering alternately every various pain of languor, restlessness, irritation, and sickening apathy, that a mind disordered, and the prey of a violent and consuming passion, can feel. As he saw her extended on cushions, leaning her head in the lap of Helene, her eyes closed, and her air of living death, he trembled. 'Lower than that thou canst not be, rose of the world,' he said, 'unless the earth cover thee!' The Duke drew near. 'Does she sleep, Helene?' he said. Helene shook her head. The Duke stood still and watched her. Her eyes were closed, and she slumbered for a moment. A faint color came over her face. She smiled, and stretched out her hand as if to welcome

some one, then let it fall down on her bosom. She murmured the name of 'Mansfeldt.' Suddenly her countenance changed. The smile fled. Tears ran down her cheeks. She started and awoke. She looked eagerly round her. 'Gone!' she cried, 'Fled——it was a dream!'

'What ails my sweet lady? no one is here.'

'No——no one *is* here——it was fancy——would I never slept! unbind my forehead, Helene——such a weight is there——how my heart beats——sick, sick to death!' at these words, her eyes closed and her senses fled. When she was at length recovered by their cares, she sighed heavily, and said, 'where is the Duke?'

'I am here, beloved. Take this wine, eat this biscuit, for love of me!'

'For love of thee!' she faintly repeated, and took what he gave her. 'Now stay with me. I am only well when you are by me.'

'Leave her to me,' said the Duke to the women. 'Be within call.'

'Brother,' she said, 'you are not offended.'

'Offended, my angel! At what?'

'I thought that you looked grave . . . . and you left me. Indeed I should weary any one . . . but have patience with me, my noble brother. . . . If I can live, I will.'

The Duke wept.

'Tears,' she said, 'nothing but tears. I weary every one.'

'Rosamund,' cried the duke, 'do not use that word. Let it never enter your thoughts that *you* can *weary* me. You afflict and rend my heart, but weary me you cannot. Come, drink that wine with me to the health of the Duchess, and the two boys whom you love. I have a letter from Hermione to-day.'

'Is she well?'

'Quite well; and sends to you words out of her own affectionate heart well worth the reading. Will you hear them?' said the Duke, drawing out

of his bosom the letter of Hermione. She listened, and the Duke marked her countenance as he read it. He saw with secret satisfaction that she was yet susceptible of pleasure, for her mournful eyes often brightened as he proceeded, and a languid smile sat on her lovely lips. Eugene sent to 'dear Lady Othamund twenty and a hundred kisses.'

'Sweet child!' said Lady Clarenstein, 'I wish that he were here.'

'Now God bless you for that wish,' said the Duke emphatically. 'Shall I put the twenty and the hundred kisses into one, and give it you for loving Eugene?' The Duke kissed her forehead.

'Why,' said she, 'do you bless me for that wish?'

'Because it gives me assurance that I and my children are yet dear to you! and therefore you will, if possible, rouse yourself from this state of apathy in consideration of our peace.'

'Alas!' she cried, with that touching expression of love and gratitude which ever accompanied her expression to the Duke, 'alas! it seems as if I had only learnt to value your kindness when I can no longer answer it as I ought. Once I received all tokens of affection either as a homage due to me, or at most without feeling that gratitude which they now inspire in my soul. Experience has taught me to feel aright. It has humbled me, but it has not given me that sane

and healthful vigor to my soul, that a knowledge of what life is, should give. I wake to the reality of life, and to know myself, only to feel my own insignificance, and to mourn over that infatuation which hid from my eyes truth and happiness. Never did woman so blessed by heaven and fortune thus cast away her happiness! and it is the conviction of this, which sinks me to the earth. If Lord Mansfeldt had died, or if by any other cause but that of my own folly I had lost him, I think that I could have lived; but to have known the treasure of that love, and to know that my own act disunited us for ever, this is insupportable. I know that yet he loves me—but how? without esteem, without respect—a passion burns in his bosom of which his noble nature is ashamed, and yields to with horror and reluctance. I am punished. I drink the gall

which I infused into a charmed cup composed of more than earthly joys—its bitterness corrodes the vital sources of my being—I am like one pursued by the revengeful furies—I thought by absence to lose remembrance, but he is here!' continued Lady Clarenstein, laying her hand on her forehead, 'and in my heart, and all around me his image stands. I see him on the Alpine heights, as he stood in that fatal picture drawn by my own hand. His hair uplifted to the breeze—with that look, and those eyes which make the soul captive. I see him in the forest's shade by the side of the foaming cataract. His manly form, endowed with grace celestial, harmonises with the grandeur of these scenes. I see him in the broad plain, guiding a steed of war. I see his form in the clouds of heaven . . . . the very birds seem to give forth his name . . . .

In vain I close my eyes; still there he stands before me. Say, what can aid me, what can cure? Oh, had I lent a docile ear to thy dear counsels, all had now been well . . . . but my noble name is tarnished, my youth is blasted, and my boasted beauty fades. I am at the feet of one human being, who spurns alike my hand, my person, and my broken heart!' She ceased. Her eyes closed; her hands, folded in the Duke's, were chilling cold; cold as the snow which they equaled in whiteness.

The Duke answered her not, but at that moment all his pride fell, and his resolution was fixed; he said to himself, 'I will not see her die!'

That night he watched by her bed-side till she slept—overcome with fatigue and sorrow, she sunk in profound, but not natural repose, for the Duke had, unknown to her, dropped an opiate into her evening beverage.

They rested at Constance for several days.

END OF PART THE THIRD.

Rosamund.

PART THE FOURTH.

CHAPTER THE FIRST.

MEANWHILE the Duke of Laudohn at Vienna slowly recovered from the fever into which the departure of Lady Clarenstein had thrown him. But he rose from his bed only to drag on a cheerless existence, embittered by disappointment, and he became the prey of a deep melancholy.

The period of time, which the Empress had given him to consult his heart, in respect to an

alliance with the Princess Adelaide had elapsed precisely at the moment when the Duke of Rhonberg left Vienna. This event, with the succeeding illness of the Duke of Laudohn, produced in her mind a suspicion as to the propriety of uniting the Princess to a man, who seemed to be governed by a violent and insurmountable passion for another, whom yet he refused to espouse. She had with address penetrated into the sentiments of the young Princess, and she saw with chagrin that while she admired the accomplished manners of the Duke, the matchless perfection of his person, and reverenced his virtues, her heart was untouched. On the contrary, she observed that the more gaily captivating Prince di Bronti was preferred to the noble, the serious, the high-souled Mansfeldt.

The Princess was all spirits and vivacity. She had not perhaps that subtle intelligence of all the mysteries of passion, which a long acquaintance with the world gives; but she had all the playful freedom of innocence, and all the native untutored modesty of a virtuous heart, which has not learned to conceal its impressibility from the dread of being misunderstood. Life, with her, was enjoyment, and Love, a smiling boy nursed by the comic muse, conscious of his own power, yet playful, full of cunning, tricks, and gay devices; catching from her smile its quaint intelligence, and the sweet mockery of her eye.

When all these graces were put in action by the subtle Italian with his figure like the dainty Paris, and his heart as brave as Achilles, it may be imagined that the Princess Adelaide

found them, what many had done before, irresistible. As to the inconstancy of the Prince, who now, with as much ardor, and as much expense of soft Italian, wooed the Princess, I shall say nothing. I do not conceive myself bound in honor to account for all the fantastic adorations of that fantastic Italian. But the Empress, though she saw affairs as they stood, resolved not rashly to decide 'till she should see the Duke of Laudohn again. It was not long ere she had that opportunity. The Duke now resumed his usual habits of activity. The fever had left him weak, but without any other bad effects. He had not, at the age of thirty, ruined his constitution, and laid the foundation of a premature old-age. Temperance and activity, and passions under command, had given the soldier Herculean strength. His look was power in repose, and he

d born alike to command, and protect
. He was not one of those men who are
ore lying on sofas, discoursing eloquently
color of a riband, or the arrangement of
quet. Nor was he one of those who spend
manly powers in performing, like Count
i, the office of coachman at the gate, and
rd in the drawing-room.

e first time that the Duke of Laudohn went
t was to see the Duchess of Rhonberg,
whom he spent several hours. Nothing
ver of confidence passed between them. The
d was to wait on the Empress. He found
done, and was received most graciously.
royal lips deigned to utter the most affection-
xpressions of regret for his illness; but her
eye, as she surveyed his fine, but emaciated

person, somewhat embarrassed him. The Princess Adelaide, he hoped, was well?

'She is,' replied the Empress. 'I will send for her. She will be happy to see your Grace abroad again. Let the Princess know,' said she, speaking to a page who stood at the bottom of the room, 'that I wish to see her.'

She soon came in, saying gaily, 'Eccomi, cara mama, che volete?'

'Adelaide, here is the Duke of Laudohn.'

With an enchanting sweetness, but with an ease that the Empress wished not to have seen, she went up to him, and preventing him from rising, she said, 'Pray do not rise to me. How

is your Grace . . . better? . . . you look very pale.'

To this the Duke replied as became him, and the Empress, taking up her tapisserie, seemed wholly intent on arranging some colors, and left them to converse together. But she only did this, the better to observe the countenance of her niece.

After some gay sallies on the part of the Princess, to which the Duke listened with that sort of pensive pleasure, which one feels in listening to the innocent prattle of a pretty woman one does not love, the Princess said, 'Your Grace is too languid for any thing but a sick knight, therefore I lay my commands upon you to sit still, and I will make you a beverage,

such as I make at night for the Emperor. He says that it is better than any thing else that he drinks. Does he not, chère maman?'

The Empress smiled and nodded. 'The Emperor spoils you, my child; if that could be.'

The Princess went to a table where there were some refreshments, and filling a cup with wine and water, she brought it to the Duke. With that incomparable grace, with which he received any attention from a woman, the Duke took it, kissed her fair hand, and drank it.

The Empress looked at the Princess, and said, 'Is that also the Emperor's fashion, Adelaide?'

The Duke smiled. 'Gracious madam,' he said, 'pardon.'

'You are very *bold*, Duke of Laudohn,' replied the Empress, with a look that meant to be serious.

Alas! the Empress saw nothing in the sweet eyes of Adelaide, but kindness and benevolence, and perfect self-composure allied to perfect modesty. 'It will never do,' said the Empress. 'She is as unconcerned, as if it had been the Emperor himself.' So she took up her work again.

Now when the Duke rose to go, she said, 'My good Lord, I am going to-morrow to * * * * for ten days. The air of the country will be of service to you. What say you? Will

you have your name in this list?' and she took up one that lay by her on the table.

'Indeed I am unfit,' said the Duke, casting down his eyes to avoid the penetrating glance of the Empress.

'Pray do!' cried the Princess. 'The gardens are so beautiful and the air so mild at * * * *. I will put your name down . . . shall I, mama?'

'Arrange it as you please with the Duke: read him the names.'

The Princess obeyed. 'First then,' she said, 'the Duke of Laudohn, who will be of no amusement, but a great deal of trouble to me to nurse.'

The Duke smiled. 'I shall never be well if I am to be nursed by your Highness. You will make me have another fever.'

'No,' said the Empress emphatically, 'not *Adelaide.*'

The Duke colored excessively. The Princess went on reading the list, which he did not hear. That 'no' of the Empress had carried him far away in thought.

He bowed, and said in a low voice, 'If your Majesty will endure me near you, I shall be most happy to attend you to * * * * to-morrow.'

'Do so, my good Lord,' replied the Empress, nodding.

The Duke bowed, and retired.

'How very ill the Duke of Laudohn looks,' said the Princess.

'You know that he has had a fever.'

'Yes, but he looks so unhappy.'

'Why do you think so?'

'You know, dear mama.'

'I, Adelaide! How should I know what makes the Duke look like a spectre?'

'Ah, gracious madam, you gave him such a look now and then, and he colored so high.'

'What look, my child? You are very observ-
ng.'

'Half pity, half contempt, dear mama, if you
vill allow me to say so. Perhaps men do not
ke to be thought ill, and I believe the Duke of
.audohn is ashamed of his fever.'

'Very possibly,' said the Empress, 'and not
vithout cause.'

'I do not understand you, chère maman.'

'Very possibly. But you seem to be greatly
nterested in the Duke of Laudohn's happiness.'

'Ah, who would not? So gentle, so noble, as
ıe is! Besides, dear mama,' cried the Princess,

throwing her arms round the neck of the Empress, 'I must ever love the Duke of Laudohn, for conducting me to you, where I am so happy.'

'This is friendship!' said the Empress to herself, pressing her lips to the white forehead of her niece, 'but it is not love. Well then,' she said aloud, 'you must repay the Duke for that service, by showing him all the kindness that you can at * * * *.'

'Yes, dear mama, I will. There is nothing that I would not do to make the Duke happy and comfortable. I can say to him every thing I think and feel, though he is so great. I never feel any reserve and shyness with him.'

The Empress sighed. 'I wish that you did,' ought she.

'Why do you sigh, dear mama? Is it wrong to ıve so little reserve? I know that I am a wild rl, and say every thing that comes into my head. he Emperor says so. Is it wrong to talk to e Duke of Laudohn?'

'No, my sweet girl. Continue to say whatter comes into your head. As long as you are good and as innocent as you are now, it will ı very well.'

'Ah, mama. Here is that tiresome Viannoni, see they are coming to tell me.'

'I thought that you liked music.'

'Yes, but I like talking better,' said the Princess.

'The Duke of Laudohn is gone.'

'But I like talking to you quite as well.'

'So much the worse,' said the Empress to herself, as the beautiful Adelaide left the Cabinet. 'A girl who talks with the same freedom to the Duke of Laudohn as she would to her mother, is certainly not in love.'

CHAPTER THE SECOND.

In after-days the Duke of Laudohn recalled to his mind the reluctance with which he had accompanied the Court to * * * *, and blessed his good genius that had led him thither. The Empress on their arrival said to him, 'These are your apartments, and when you wish for society, come to the saloon, or to my cabinet.'

The sweet manner with which the Princess Adelaide treated him, spread a shade of consola-

tion over his lacerated heart, and insensibly won on his confidence. The Princess knew only in part the story of his broken marriage with Lady Clarenstein, but there was an innate delicacy in the Princess's mind, that prevented her from speaking to him of Lady Clarenstein, as once she had done. It was easy to see that a heavy weight oppressed him, and though the ardor of her friendship for him, and the interest which she felt for Lady Clarenstein, made her desire his confidence, yet she in no way seemed to solicit it officiously. His gentle and serious demeanor inspired respect even in sovereignty itself, and the Princess had not yet learned to believe that her rank authorised her to ask impertinent questions. Indeed, for a Princess, she had a very amiable conception of what is due to the feelings of her inferiors.

It chanced one day that she stood with the Duke of Laudohn in the embrasure of a window, conversing. The Duke spoke with more gaiety than he was accustomed to do, when the name of Clarenstein, pronounced by one of a groupe of Ladies near them, made him abruptly cease. The Princess also was silent from a feeling of sympathetic interest. One of the ladies said, 'I suppose then that she *is* dying. What says the Duchess of Rhonberg?'

'Oh,' replied the other, 'the Duchess, since their departure, is silence personified. But Count Palfi told me he had seen her on the road to Constance.'

'And what said he?'

'Oh, just the same, you know, that he and all the men here and every where else say of her; they think her so supremely celestial that I verily believe if she were laid in her grave, they had all rather stand round it to look at her, than at any living woman. He said, however, that she looked like an angel breathing between heaven and earth, or some such romantic nonsense. He said that the Duke lifted her in and out of the Barouche; so I suppose that she will not dance the valtz any more, at least, in this world.'

'Is it a consumption?'

'I believe so. Though Count Palfi would probably die on the spot, if one asked him so *earthly* a question.'

These ladies then retired. The Princess clasped her hands together, and exclaimed, 'oh I do hope it is not so. I do hope that sweet lady is not so ill.'

The Duke groaned. The agony of his feelings was not to be endured. He covered his face with his hands and retired.

The Princess, distressed alike at the mournful account given of Lady Clarenstein, and the violent impression which it seemed to make on the Duke of Laudohn, felt the wish to follow his steps, and give him some consolation. But delicacy checked that wish, and she fell into a deep reverie, from which she was awakened by the Empress, who came up to her and said, 'my

sweet child, what makes you this evening so silent? you look pale.'

'Do I, mama? I am not ill.'

'If you like to go into the air before the dance begins, do so. Perhaps it will refresh you.'

So saying, the Empress threw her own shawl over the Princess, and she stepped out on the lawn which lay before the windows of the saloon. Full of reflexion on what had passed, she went on without directing her steps by design any whither. She found herself on a magnificent terrace, where the Empress and her ladies were accustomed to walk every evening; and not wishing to be intruded on, she struck into an alley on her right hand. A lofty grove of beech-trees stretched along that

side of the terrace, and many shady alleys and walks were cut in it. She had not proceeded far in her walk, ere she observed, at a distance, the Duke of Laudohn walking with folded arms and an air of the deepest dejection. She paused for one moment, then turned to retrace her steps: but he, having seen, hastily approached her. She therefore remained, and with great sweetness she said, 'I am very sorry to have intruded so unintentionally on your retirement, though I believe that the same interest at this moment occupies the minds of both of us. Ever since I came to this court, my lord, the manners of the Countess of Clarenstein have excited in me an interest for her happiness, and if so young and inexperienced a woman as I may presume to say so, I feel that interest for you, my lord.'

'I thank you, gentle Princess, from my soul I thank you. The man, be he who he may, who raises in your breast such an interest, must think himself greatly honored.'

'And in the mean time,' said the Princess with a gentle ardor, 'in the mean time he remains unhappy!'

The Duke sighed.

'Forgive me,' continued the Princess, 'if I say that I see with pain that you are so, and though the deep respect I bear you awes me into silence, I could say—'

'What, thou most amiable of women? you can say nothing it shall displease me to hear.'

'I know,' replied the Princess, 'that there is in your sex a pride of soul that makes it grievous to confess they are unhappy when the heart is the cause.'

'I have none of that false pride, believe me. Duty commands suppression of feeling. I would fain not lose the honor and esteem of noble minds, because I have for ever lost my soul's happiness on earth. There is a conduct to be maintained. The claims of humanity must be answered, though our own individual happiness be gone past recal. This virtue, dear lady, is often found in your sex—in ours, seldom. We are stronger, yet not so strong. We can endure more, yet not so much. I am unhappy, profoundly unhappy, and the seat of evil is here.'

The Duke laid his hand on his breast as he spoke.

'Can you love in vain?' asked the Princess.

'I am *not* beloved,' said the Duke, and his color rose, and his brow was overcast.

'I know something of your story, but partially only; yet I cannot think that you are not beloved by her whom you honored with your affection: and that sweet lady who never spoke your name but there were such signs of grief in her dark eyes. She could not be false. It is some cruel concealment. Perhaps——pardon me——perhaps you have been too impetuous.'

'I have borne much——great and reiterated insults. Sweet Princess, if the interest that you take in Lady Clarenstein makes you wish to know more minutely the circumstances that dissolved our union, and made a wretch of the man who loved her as his own soul, I will declare them.' The Princess signified her desire to hear them. They seated themselves at the foot of a spreading beech, and the Duke, after a moment's pause, spoke thus:

'I will not fatigue your gentle ear with the relation of my youthful years. I was early cast on the world to stand without that protection which usually attends on the offspring of noble parents. I was bred in camps: far from the enervating pleasures of a court, and little used to the society of your sex, so that my ardor for

glory was united to a high-toned and romantic admiration of that lovely and fatally powerful half of the human species. When peace was declared two years since, I returned to my country, and passing through the province of * * * * where the castle of Rhonberg stands, anxious to see the Duke, I came there. The Countess of Clarenstein received me. Oh moment pregnant with strange unknown joy, and with woes as strange! you, madam, who know the captivation of her manners, may in part conceive what their effect must be on me. I knew that the Duke had a sister, but I had never seen her. My fate was decided. I loved. I knew from the Duke that strong trait in his sister's character, which made her at once so dangerous and so fascinating. He warned me of the danger which I ran, and constrained me, against my will, most

tainly not with my consent, to act a cautious
rt, to defer the declaration of my attachment
l I should have some cause to think that I was
t wholly unlikely to "succeed."'

'Was that generous, Duke of Laudohn?'
ked the Princess with some surprise.

'No, madam. If on such cautious calculating
udence I had acted, I should have esteemed
yself an unworthy and disloyal suitor: but they
now little of this heart, who can believe that I
ad the wish so to act; nay, I had not the
ower.' Here the Duke paused, and discovered
ome embarrassment. 'I cannot own, not even
o your Highness, without confusion, to what
nad excess I loved, with what cowardice I shrunk
rom the power of her eye, with what sudden

transport the sound of her voice, or that smile which belongs to her alone, overwhelmed me. Suffice it to say, that I declared myself, and was, with an angel softness, with the most noble confidence that ever woman showed to man, accepted. We came to Vienna. Can I declare the change which took place in her? so abrupt, so violent was it, that I was confounded by the variety of humor; urged to madness by the capricious treatment which she made me endure. Stung to the soul, blushing at my own weakness, I wooed, I supplicated, I adored. I was her very slave. But no more. I will not, oh loved yet perfidious Clarenstein, I will not dishonor thy name by needless repetition of the torments thou madest me bear. The Prince di Bronti gained her ear; —he loved her.'

'The Prince di Bronti, my Lord!' said the Princess.

'Yes, madam. He loved her, and oft she seemed to listen to his ardent vows. Well am I assured, that it was but to vex and gall my patience. Once I left her, strong in resolve never to return. She breathed a sigh. She shed a tear, and I did return. Our marriage was declared. I thought that I had grasped the charmed cup of happiness. I thought, oh fond delusion! that I possessed her heart, and that all she had done was but to try my constancy and truth. So oft do women weaken, while they think to establish their power. A few days only were wanting to the celebration of my marriage, when she gave me publicly a never-to-be-forgotten insult, broke her word with me, and gave her

hand, promised to me with all her winning witchery, which can give even to trifles an enchantment, to the Prince di Bronti at a masked ball: did it with a cool, deliberate, and firm resolve to render me, her affianced lord, a public jest. It was enough. Our union was dissolved.'

'It was indeed much, and perhaps more than could be pardoned even to her,' said the Princess.

'I am not,' replied the Duke of Laudohn, 'of an implacable nature, and perhaps I could madly have overlooked even this, had I then had the shadow of a hope left that I was beloved. But there was the sting that goaded me. Not *equal* love I demanded: if by mine it were to be measured, that were a wild desire, but honored at

least I must be, by the woman who bears my name. Her lover might endure much without dishonor, but her husband could never consent to be the passive servile minion of her wild caprice. Yet love still lingers here, and life is bereft of all joy. I blush at my unconquerable weakness, and possess no more that, without which I cannot live—my own esteem. This, dear lady, is my story; and now say what can redeem my withered happiness?'

'Duke of Laudohn,' said the Princess, 'accept my thanks. If before I heard you I wished your happiness, what must I now do? But there is one thing——could the Countess ever know the artifice connived at, if not exercised, on your part, before you became her suitor?'

'She never knew it, madam.'

'Is your grace assured of that?'

'The Duke, the Duchess, and myself alone, knew it. They, I am certain, would never disclose it to her.'

'But if by any means Lady Clarenstein had discovered it? what think you, under such circumstances, would be the conduct of a woman so high-spirited as herself?'

'I should think that she would have discarded me for ever.'

'That is *one* mode of conduct. There was *another*, and that she chose.'

'Heavens! what thoughts you raise in me! but if she could have produced that palliation of her conduct at the moment of our separation, would she not have done it?'

'No. I think that she would not, so high-spirited as she is. But would your grace think it a palliation? would in that case your honor be satisfied?'

The Duke pressed his hands to his eyes. 'Alas! the slightest word I should take as a reprieve from despair.'

The young Princess slept little that night: her thoughts were all engaged in reflecting on what the Duke of Laudohn had, in confidence, related to her—and she formed a thousand designs in the

warmth of an affectionate heart to unravel the sort of mystery, which, in her opinion, strongly marked the conduct of the Countess of Clarenstein.

CHAPTER THE THIRD.

THE morning was bright and lovely, when the Princess Adelaide left her couch. As soon as she had finished her toilette, she dismissed her attendants, and went out into a balcony filled with sweet flowers. Seating herself on a low chair at the foot of an orange-tree, she opened a book which she had in her hand, and began to read. She was thus employed, when she heard a voice

below say, in soft Italian, 'Principessa!' It was the Prince di Bronti's voice, and her heart began to beat, and her color came, but she did not answer. Again the voice pronounced, 'Principessa —adorata—risponde!'

She went to the front of the balcony which was near the ground; 'Prince,' she said, 'this *must not be!* I told you so yesterday.'

'Ah, I have no memory for such cruelties!'

'You will see me in an hour's time at the breakfast of the Empress—begone!—'

The Prince leaped into the balcony, and put himself at the feet of the half-angry, half-pleased, Adelaide.

'Perdona, Principessa!'

'Sua altezza il Principe di Bronti è troppo insolente.'

'Sua altezza la Principessa Adelaide è troppo bella. Ha dormita ella? Ha passata una dolcissima notte? Ha pensata a me forse?'

The Princess blushed.

'E vero dunque che'l bel cor ha pensato al povero Bronti chi t'ama, chi t'adora, chi ti brama più che la vita? Come è taciturna e discreta! Apri quei labbri vermigli e rispondami. Ma perche non mi guarda! Principessa—sei sdegnata con me?'

'Si, Prence.'

The Prince's countenance changed; and he lost at once, in a touching air of profound respect, that gay and petulant audacity which he knew very well how to render irresistible. 'If I have done any thing to displease her Highness, at least she will deign to tell me what it is. When those heavenly eyes frown, the Prince is no longer troppo insolente. He cannot live if she is angry.'

'Ah, Prince!' exclaimed the Princess, in a tone of gentle reproach, 'how often has that been said before to other eyes than mine! Look at that insect yonder, with its painted wings. See how it goes from flower to flower, and rests on none! That is your emblem.'

As she spoke, the butterfly flew on to a rose-bud which she had in her bosom, and remained there. The Prince smiled, and she could not help doing the same.

'Accept the omen!' he said. The insect flew away.

'See,' she cried, 'your omen, Prince.'

The butterfly, as if it favored the Prince, flew back, and settled again on the flower.

'It returns,' cried the Prince; 'vittoria!'

The Princess held out her lovely white hand, and the butterfly came and strayed over it. The

Prince brushed it off, clasped her fair hand, and kissed it.

'Sei audace,' cried the Princess, gravely.

'You said that it was my emblem. May a butterfly do more than a Prince?' said he, rearing himself up with a proud grace. 'Son Prence io! nato di sangue imperiale, e nelle vene amor arde e trionfa!'

'Per mille e mille oggetti insieme. Per Ippolita—per la Contessa di Clarenstein—per me.'

'La Contessa di Clarenstein!' exclaimed the Prince. 'I never loved the Countess of Clarenstein.'

'Will your highness *say that?*' asked the Princess, gravely.

'I hope that the Princess does not compare the love I have for her, with that with which the Countess of Clarenstein could inspire me?'

The Princess was silent, and he became irritated. He bit his handsome lips, and went on in a tone of contempt. 'The Countess of Clarenstein, the proudest, the most insolent coquette that ever breathed! It is true that I loved her once—that is, I should have sovereign pleasure in humbling her proud spirit—and does the Princess think that such love as that can be called love?'

'Indeed I cannot make such nice distinctions; and, for aught I know, her highness may be as

much the plaything of the Prince's fancy, as the Countess of Clarenstein.'

'Will her highness at least deign to tell me,' cried the Prince with suppressed fierceness, 'who it is that has been poisoning her ear with calumnies against me? Who is the preceptor to her heart? There is a serpent beneath the flowers.'

'That is very insolent, Prince, and I am offended.'

'Only that I may *fawn* upon that serpent, and woo it into better favor: or, perhaps,' cried he, with a fierce gesture, 'I *can crush* a viper that would sting me.'

'What mean you, Prince, by this intemperate passion?'

'It is too much to be twice supplanted.'

'*Supplanted!*' repeated the Princess.

'But I have my revenge. A rich one, too. I have his proud heart in curb—it shall gall him yet. Let him consume and languish. Let him adore the Countess of Clarenstein, and die for it, if he will. 'Tis at my pleasure. 'Tis in my power to give his august melancholy a mortal stab—I have done it—I have that to tell the Duke of Laudohn, would make him bend his haughty knees to me——Let him desire, and perish.'

Scarcely were the words passed his lips, when the Prince, recollecting himself, stood confounded at his own imprudence. Seeing the Princess, all amazement, looking at him with a mixture of wonder and displeasure, he turned away his head, in great and undisguised embarrassment.

'You know a secret that would make the Duke of Laudohn bend his knees to you?'

'What have I said?'

'You have the power to give him a mortal stab!'

The Prince threw himself on his knees before her. 'I have betrayed myself—by all that is

nerous and kind, adored Princess, forget what
y passion uttered.'

'You have, indeed, betrayed yourself. To
rget it is impossible.—Such a nature as yours
akes one recoil with terror.'

'Beloved Princess!'

'Rise, Sir—you terrify me—it is no time now
fawn upon me—explain yourself, or—'

'What means your highness?' said the Prince,
cessively disconcerted.

'This, my Lord—either declare to me the
cret in which the Duke of Laudohn's happiness
concerned, or—'

'In the name of heaven,' cried the Prince, not threaten me—it is impossible for me to plain myself. Any thing else will I do to exp the violence of which I was guilty in your p sence—pray be appeased.'

'Declare to me your secret!'

'I cannot.'

'To the Duke himself, declare it.'

'May I perish first.'

'Then live without my favor,' said the Prince with great dignity.

'Oh, go not!' exclaimed the Prince; 'not in anger. I cannot live without your favor.'

'Chuse then, my Lord, between my will and your own. You speak to me no more, or you consent to make the Duke of Laudohn reparation.'

'Detested name—I hate the Duke of Laudohn!'

'Leave my presence, Sir—What! am I obeyed, or not? Oh, 'tis well—retire—you make me shudder. To so furious and implacable a nature shall I give my heart?' The Prince was thunderstruck at her firmness. She turned back, and said to him, with more gentleness, 'Prince, I love you—you know it—I tell you, candidly, that

a dissension between us will make me unhappy—consent to do what I ask of you;' and then the Princess extended her hand, which he took and bathed with tears of mingled love and vexation. 'If it is true,' she said, 'that you love me—'

'If I love you, cruel Princess!'

'If, indeed, you would have me think so, consent to perform an act of nobility and honor. By your own confession, you have, in some way, injured the Duke of Laudohn: repair that injury, if yet it is in your power, and then you will have no cause to complain of my severity—'till then we part in anger, and we speak not—will you let me go without a word? Will you not detain me? Silent! I also can be resolute—Farewell, Prince di Bronti.'

The Princess imparted to no one, not even to the Duke of Laudohn, the subject of this conversation. She feared alike their high spirit, and resolved to wait a few days the effect of her own displeasure on the Prince's resolution. She knew that she possessed power over him, and she hoped, that by her means, the Duke of Laudohn's happiness might be restored. She was of so mild and gentle a nature, that she felt distressed at the disunion between herself and the Prince. She loved him too with a passionate attachment, and she was, during the whole day, as unhappy as himself. The haughty Prince alternately braved her cold and offended air, and supplicated her, with all his graceful and eloquent *pantomime*, to be appeased —but in vain. She resisted all. She spoke not —looked not at him—refused to sing or dance with him—he burnt with rage and vexation.

At night, when the Princess retired, she sat down by the window, which was open, and her beautiful eyes were filled with tears. She heard the sound of a lute which breathed some low and sweet chords. A Neapolitan air, which she loved, was played; and a voice that breathed, at once, passion, petulance, and intreaty, gave it all the expression that the Prince could give it. The light of a candelabre discovered to his eyes her beautiful figure. Suddenly the light was removed, and the lovely figure disappeared. The Prince threw down the lute, and retired to pass a sleepless night. In the morning, when she was dressing, one of her ladies brought her a perfumed billet. 'Take it back,' she said, seeing the address. The lady lingered. 'Why do you hesitate?' asked the Princess.

'The Prince di Bronti is like a spectre this morning. He conjured me to implore your highness to read it.'

'Perhaps,' said she to herself, 'perhaps he consents to do what I require of him.' She opened the billet, and read these words.

"For the love of heaven, Madam, treat me not this day as you did yesterday! I cannot bear such severity. Pray be satisfied. If it were *possible* for me to obey you, I would. By my soul, I love you with so dear a love, that I would cut off my right hand to please you—or any other thing that would even deform me in your eyes. Principessa, let us be happy to-day. When you

come to the Empress's chamber, deign to smile on me with those heavenly eyes.

"BRONTI.

To this, which was no submission, she sent the lady with this answer:—

"I have no pleasure in making you unhappy, Prince di Bronti, but you know the remedy.

"ADELAIDE."

The Prince, when he saw her enter the chamber, and perceived what he was to expect, hastily retired. He came no more into her presence. He excused himself from attending the Empress at dinner, and the beautiful Adelaide could eat

nothing. She began to fear, that her friendship for the Duke of Laudohn would separate the Prince from her, and she went into her own chamber to weep. Scarcely had she been there five minutes, when they brought her another billet. Agitated between hope and fear, she tore it open and read, "I am all submission. Suffer me to see you.

"BRONTI."

She took a pen and traced these lines. "Go into the grove of laurels opposite the balcony, and I will see you."

With a beating heart, she threw a long veil over her sylph-like figure, and repaired to the grove. When the Prince saw her advancing, he

came slowly forward. The greatest embarrassment was visible in his air. He took off his hat, and bowed with such a dejected elegance, that the heart of la petite Princesse was touched. However, she said nothing. He hesitated long, and colored, and twisted his fine person as if he were in torture. At length he said, drawing a letter from his breast, 'The secret, which it imports the Duke of Laudohn's peace to know, is contained in this letter. The letter is unsealed, that your highness may read it—tell the contents of it to you, I cannot.'

The Prince bowed again, and turned away much distressed. He made a step to go—then came back, and said in a voice of indignation and sorrow, 'You *forced* me to do this—You will hate, despise me, perhaps. You are very cruel—

whatever are my errors, I do, most assuredly, adore you, and I cannot bear your displeasure—but I know that you will never speak to me more.'

The Princess, at once astonished and delighted, exclaimed, 'My Prince, return—take my thanks. Whatever the letter contains, I must ever think your compliance a proof of love to me.'

The Prince shook his head. 'Read it, Madam—If after that you speak kindly to me—your sweetness—your candor—your youthful and feminine innocence all bear on my soul with a strange influence—or I never could have stooped to seek a pardon from the Duke of Laudohn—but he is a noble fellow, and I hope that it is not yet too late.' So saying, he abruptly retired. The Princess went

to her chamber, and opening the letter, read as follows.

"Duke of Laudohn, in obedience to the commands of the Princess Adelaide, I address you. After the injury I believe myself to have done you, I know that I must be an object of detestation and contempt to you. I shall not, therefore, oblige your eye to read the expressions of my remorse for what I have done against you, and the woman you adore. You may, if you please, take my life. I am ready to make any reparation that you may be disposed to require. Your dagger, a thousand times plunged into my heart, could not make me feel what I shall do at that moment, when the eyes of the generous and noble Adelaide shall read these lines.

"It is known to you, my Lord, that we both loved the Countess of Clarenstein—you with a noble and a true passion—I with a disloyal one. I thought that it was a pure and genuine love—but now I know that it was not—now that my soul hangs with fearful dread on the decision of one who possesses, what no woman ever yet possessed before in me, a power alike over my passions and my heart. I hated you, my Lord, for the preference Lady Clarenstein gave you over myself. I sought occasion to injure you in her esteem—I found it—and I used it. I overheard a private conversation between you and the Duke of Rhonberg. I discovered the species of artifice to which you reluctantly had yielded, in compliance with the Duke's request. I met Lady Clarenstein, I disclosed it to her. I exaggerated—I aggravated—I grossly calumniated you. I

accused you of a security in her favor, so audacious, so insolent, that I left her full of indignation, and breathing nothing but revenge. On this she acted. I saw the success of my perfidious machinations. I urged, from time to time, her resentment against you, when I saw her courage sinking—for she loves you, my Lord—witness a thousand times her emotion, her tearful eyes, her suppressed sighs, when I thus poured into her ear false and base aspersions on you. Your marriage was declared:—I lost all hope. I followed her on that night when you stood as her declared husband before the whole Court of Vienna. I pursued her, I say, like another Lucifer, to the retirement of her chamber. I so successfully filled her soul with rage and indignation against you, that I believed that I had at length succeeded in ruining you for ever. I told her,

that you had made her love for you, your sport amongst your friends—that you had artfully pretended to leave her, (as you did some time preceding your being affianced to her) only to work on her feelings, and subdue the pride of her soul to your own pleasure. The next morning I requested her hand at the masked ball; and she, influenced by my artful insinuations, accepted it. The rest you know. I am as firmly convinced, as that I am that I exist, that from this cause arose the whole of that conduct in the Countess, which raised in you such high resentment, which induced you to break your marriage, and despoiled her of her peace, her health, and her heart's desire. Duke of Laudohn, I have injured you. If you chuse to run your sword through me, I am ready to meet you, but I will *never* fight you. No, by heaven, I will not. You may, if it is your pleasure,

brand me to the world as a villain. My life, my honor, are in your hands—but know, my Lord, that the scorn of the whole world, and your sword plunged in my breast, would be nothing to me in comparison of what I suffer in writing this letter which the Princess Adelaide reads.

I have the honor to be, &c.

"BRONTI."

CHAPTER THE TWELFTH.

When the Princess had read this letter, she clasped her hands together in a transport of joy. 'Oh now,' she cried, 'that sweet lady may still be happy! The Duke of Laudohn must think this a sufficient palliation. Poor Casimir—the Princess Adelaide has read the letter, and though she cannot but wish that this had not been, yet it would be unjust and barbarous to make him suf-

fer for complying with my demands, when it must have cost him so much to do it. But how shall I see the Duke of Laudohn?'

The Princess went to the Cabinet of the Empress, where she found him alone. She advanced to embrace the Empress. 'My dear child,' said she, 'I cannot think what makes you so pale these two days. You are not ill?'

'Oh no, dear mama.'

'Have you walked this morning? I observed that yesterday you were not beyond the terrace. Something affects my sweet girl.'

'I will walk if you chuse, mama: but indeed I am very well.'

'Do so, my love. Duke of Laudohn, attend the Princess. I must dismiss you both, for I have letters to write.'

The Duke and the Princess left the cabinet, and took the way into the park.

Now when the Princess came to a sequestered spot in the grounds, secure, as she thought, from intrusion, she paused, and looking at the Duke, she changed color a little, and he felt her arm tremble within his. He looked surprised, and said, 'what makes you tremble, sweet Princess? Indeed I think that, as the Empress says, something does affect you.'

'Yes, something does affect me deeply—but it is joy, hope, and you are the occasion– ever since

your grace honored me with your confidence, my heart has been wholly occupied with what you then told me.'

'I thank you, gentle Princess, from my soul.'

'Yes,' cried the Princess with animation, 'you shall thank me, when you know what I bring you. You shall be happy yet.'

The Duke looked at her with a calm and benignant smile.

'Did you not tell me, my Lord, that if any palliation of Lady Clarenstein's conduct could be made to you, that you could forgive her every thing?'

'Oh, would to heaven you could tell me but the slightest!'

'I can—Listen to me, Duke. Chance has put it in my power to draw the secret from the breast of the only person who could ever have cleared that mystery. The Prince di Bronti,' continued the Princess, 'loves me: yesterday morning we had some altercation. He was betrayed into a violent passion, and in that intemperate sally, he incautiously suffered it to escape him, that he was in possession of a secret which held at bay your happiness, and that of the Countess of Clarenstein. I will not relate all that passed between the Prince and myself. I urged him, on pain of forfeiting my favor, to disclose to me, or to yourself, this important secret, but he refused. But not an hour since, I again saw

him, and, in a word, my Lord, I come to you on the part of the Prince di Bronti, charged with this letter, containing that which will explain all.' Saying this, she presented the letter to him, not without an anxiety that betrayed itself as to the feelings with which the Duke of Laudohn would be agitated, on reading it. As to him, his hands trembled as he took the letter. He sunk at her feet for one moment, without uttering a word, then rose, and retired to a distant spot, where he opened the letter and read it.

Oh noble and generous Mansfeldt, what were thy sensations as thine eye rapidly took in the words of that confession! Astonishment, pity, indignation, strove in his bosom. A flood of unutterable tenderness rushed again into his soul. 'Why spoke she not?' he cried. 'Why did she

suffer me to leave her? Barbarian that I was, with what merciless and deliberate coolness, I have tortured that heart. She loved me—she loved me, and I knew it not!—False perfidious Bronti!' cried the Duke, as he read again the words, 'I told her, that you had made her love for you a public sport . . . detested slander! . . . But thou, Clarenstein . . . thou beloved, adored, dost thou yet love me? Oh God, now be gracious to me! Let me but see her, but clasp her to my heart. We will live, or die, together.'

At length the Duke came back to the Princess. The effusion of his gratitude, expressed with a noble simplicity, overpowered the gentle Adelaide. 'Are you satisfied?' she cried anxiously. 'Will you return to that sweet lady?'

'Will I return?'

'But do not then delay. Depart instantly. She is ill.'

At that idea, which had not struck on the imagination of the Duke to check the transport of his soul, his countenance changed . . . he shuddered at the thought of her danger, and the noble Mansfeldt wept.

'Have courage, my Lord,' said the Princess, after a few moments' silence. 'I am sure that those ladies exaggerated her illness. . . . Lady Clarenstein has an excellent constitution . . . it is only grief.'

'Only grief!' repeated the Duke; 'what a torrent of delicious madness, of terror, and of hope, do those words convey to my soul! Angel of goodness,' said he, turning to the Princess, 'what can I say? It is only at the feet of Lady Clarenstein that I can bless you as you merit.'

'Indeed your grace much overrates my kindness. To know Lady Clarenstein is to love her, and I would also have your friendship, if so great a mind can feel it for so simple a girl as myself. But there is one thing I could ask . . . the honor of the Prince di Bronti?' The Princess at these words looked anxiously in the Duke's face.

'It shall be sacred. The secret shall never pass my lips, but to the Countess, and to her

brother, and with them it will also be sacred. If the Prince desires it, I will shake hands with him now, or at any future time.'

'May I say that to the Prince?'

'Certainly, Madam.'

'Enough,' said the Princess. 'Let us now return, that you may arrange your departure.'

'Oh, Madam!' cried the Count, as he drew her arm within his own, 'what is it I do not owe you?'

Now, as they were passing the Terrace which leads to the palace, the Princess saw between the trees the Prince di Bronti. He was just

returned from riding, having, on leaving the Princess, thrown himself on his horse, and galloped round the Park with the speed of a madman. Indeed, the Prince, stung with confusion at what he had been forced to confess, and dreading the effect that it would leave on the mind of the Princess, was sufficiently unhappy. With all that naïveté and artlessness which rendered the Princess so captivating, she was so reasonable, so innocent, so perfectly amiable, that she had insensibly acquired, over the Prince's ferocious nature, an influence which was perpetually, by slow and gentle degrees, ameliorating his disposition. There is a power in virtue, when combined with sweetness of manners, and tenderness of disposition, that surpasses the conception of those who make virtue unattractive by the coldness, the illiberality, and austerity of their

manner. 'La vertu,' says Montesquieu, 'doit se lier avec les Graces; elle a tant de peine à se faire aimer.'

When the Princess saw his dejected air, as he paced slowly along, striking his whip against the trees as he went, she was moved; and stopping abruptly, she said, 'My Lord . . . there is the Prince.'

'Dearest Lady, why do you look so fearfully at me? Do you think I have the heart of a ruffian?'

'Oh no . . . but perhaps we had better go another way.'

'No—I think we had better go on. My hand is the Prince's, if he will take it.' So saying, the

Count advanced towards him. The Prince, on seeing him, started, and abruptly turned his steps another way. The Duke followed him, and with that noble ingenuousness that breathed in all his actions, said something to him in a low voice, and extended his hand. But the Prince recoiled, and said with great emotion, 'No . . . it is impossible that you can desire it.'

'On my soul I do.'

The Princess came up and said, 'Prince, take the hand the Duke offers you.'

At sight of her, he colored high, and pulled his hat over his eyes. 'Is it possible,' he cried, 'that the Princess can now deign to regard me?'

'It is impossible,' cried the Duke vehemently, 'to do otherwise—to err from passion is human, but to acknowledge it, is the act of a noble heart. Pray shake hands with me.'

'You are a generous fellow, Laudohn . . . only shoot me through the body, and I will take your hand—only revenge yourself on me, take some of my blood, and I am satisfied.'

'Be satisfied of this, that no power on earth should make me shoot your Highness, or take your sword into my hands.'

'It is true,' cried the Prince vehemently, throwing down a cane at the Duke's feet, 'that I cannot claim so noble a vengeance. I am no longer your equal: the injury that I did you was so

espicable, that you are authorised, in not using ne like a gentleman. Strike me!'

'My Lord,' cried the Duke, turning away, this is insupportable! You confound, you shock me, by such words. I will neither do one nor the other.'

'Must I then be *pardoned?*' cried the Prince.

'Casimir!' exclaimed the Princess, with a look at once tender and commanding.

'Indeed, I would be your friend, Prince di Bronti,' said the Duke, 'if you will accept that name from me.'

'This is too much!' cried the Prince. 'My Lord, I once detested you. But I have the heart of a man, though I played the part of a fiend. Noble Laudohn—I accept your hand, and your pardon.' At these words, the Prince grasped the Duke's hand, who, seeming much affected, hastily retired.

'Now,' cried the Princess, 'now I *do* love you. You make me happier than I ever was before, and it is very well you consented to do this,' said she, 'for I could not bear to pass such another day as yesterday. Now let us be happy.'

'Ah, I desire nothing so much,' said the Prince, sighing. 'You are very good not to hate me—despise me.'

'Do not look so coldly on me, Prince.'

'Coldly! . . . no, adored Princess . . . but when a man looks, at once, like a fool and devil, before the woman whom he adores, it is very hard.'

'I do not think that you look like either one or the other, Prince.'

'Say *my* Prince, then, as you used to do before this cursed affair. How you frowned!'

'Mio Prence.'

'You threw down the rose that I offered you.'

'Mio caro Prence!'

'You would not dance with me: you took away the light from your window: you froze the blood in my veins with that detested "Prince di Bronti." You made it boil with rage, by making Count Palfi sit next you at dinner, you . . .'

'Basta, basta, Prence.'

'Si, Principessa, basta; è troppo.'

'Placatevi con me.'

'No.'

'Not when I ask you?' cried the Princess.

'Principessa . . . . adorata.'

'Ebbene . . . . ma ecco un miracolo! ecco l'umiltà!' cried the Princess, laughing.

'It is true,' cried the Prince, 'that was a miracle reserved for you to perform. Her highness is very good.'

'"Her highness is very good," in this funereal voice! Come, be happy again, and cheerful. I am going to drive out—Will you drive my white horses, or must I get some other Cavalier?'

'I will make a ghost of any one, who dares to lay his hand on the silken reins of thy white horses!' cried the Prince, passionately, 'though it were Laudohn himself. If that fine fellow would only have been persuaded to give me one

thrust or two with his sword, I could have been myself again, but to be pardoned by a man, and despised by a woman . . . and that woman, you, Princess . . . '

'Prince,' cried Adelaide, 'I will not have you say that ugly word. I love you. Must I say so again,' and the Princess held out her hands . . . 'now pray let us be friends . . . your eyes are like a woman's, full of tears. Kiss my hand again, Casimir.'

The Prince, it may be imagined, waited not to have this command repeated, and the charming Adelaide, all blushing and in tears, withdrew herself from his arms, saying in a low voice, 'Basta, basta, caro Prence; è troppo.'

CHAPTER THE FIFTH.

When the Princess returned from her airing, she went to the Empress. As she came in, the Duke rose from the ground where he had knelt at the feet of the Empress, who said 'God bless you, Duke of Laudohn. May your journey prosper.' Then seeing the Princess, she said, 'Come hither, my sweet girl, and bid farewell to the Duke of Laudohn. He leaves us this moment for Switzerland.'

The Princess clasped her hands together, and said, 'God be praised.'

'You know the cause?' said the Empress.

'Yes, dear mama—the Duke told me. Bear my kindest, dearest affection to Lady Clarenstein,' said she, turning to the Duke.

The Empress sighed. The Duke seemed greatly moved. 'Go, my Lord,' said the former, 'and every joy attend you.'

The Empress gave him her hand to kiss, and she gave him also that of the Princess. He pressed them both to his lips, and casting on the charming Adelaide a look of the most passionate gratitude, he left the cabinet.

It was evening before he reached Vienna. He went to his Hôtel, and made some arrangements for his instant departure, and ordering his carriage to come for him to the Hôtel de Rhonberg, he went thither, and was admitted to the Duchess, who was alone. The look of deep melancholy, with which she received him, greatly alarmed him, and he had scarcely courage to ask her, if she had any accounts from Switzerland.

'The Duke has written to me to day: *he* is well, but——'

'Oh, say not that she is ill . . . that she is worse!'

'Alas! my Lord,' cried the Duchess, bursting into tears, 'it is what we must expect. I dread

the receipt of every letter; but I believe that she is not in any immediate danger.'

'Danger,' cried the Duke, in a voice of agony. 'Duchess, do you mean to kill me? Now to talk of danger, when heaven smiles upon us?'

'Smiles—alas! It will smile no more on my dear Lord and myself. Rosamund, I do fear, is perishing.'

'Then we will perish together!' cried the Duke wildly . . . '*now* to lose her . . . now all is cleared up . . . when if she but love me still . . .'

'Love you!' cried the Duchess, reproachfully. 'But what mean you by all being cleared up, and what is this passionate emotion?'

'Duchess, in a few moments I am on the road to Switzerland, to unite myself for ever to the Countess of Clarenstein, or die at her feet.'

The Duchess gave a scream of joy and wonder. 'Oh tell me what all this means, for the love of heaven!'

The Duke obeyed, and gave her the account which has been already related; which when the Duchess heard, the expression of her joy at once charmed and terrified him: for it bespoke too strongly the danger in which she apprehended Lady Rosamund to be. The Duke now

inquired of her, where he must direct his steps to find them.

'My letter,' said she, looking at it, 'is dated—but they will, no doubt, have left that place.'

'I must then pursue them, night and day.'

The Duchess sat silent for a few moments. She took up the letter, and ran her eye over it, and the tears trickled down her fair cheeks.—'Noble Rosamund!' she said, 'what magnanimity, what delicacy!'

The Duke's eye bespoke impatience, to know the meaning of these words. 'Oh, dearest Duchess,' he said, 'if I might, without indiscretion, ask to see that letter . . . it were but

kindness to one, half beside himself with doubt and apprehension. Tell me, for I am well assured you know, am I yet beloved by Lady Clarenstein? Will it be possible to persuade, convince her, that I was wholly, entirely innocent of ever acting upon so false a principle, though I consented to the Duke's wishes?—Suffer me to read his letter.'

'It will greatly wound you.'

'Oh heavens, what am I to learn?——Lady Clarenstein then no longer regards me!'

'Oh not so—read the letter, however, my lord, and learn at once how you are beloved, and how high a soul of honor she possesses. I believe that I do not disobey the Duke's wishes in suffer-

ing this letter to meet your eye, since now the fatal cause of all my adored sister's conduct being known to you, you think your honor satisfied, and will again, of your own free and ardent will, return to her.' At these words the Duchess put the letter into his hands, and he read as follows.

LETTER

To the Duchess of Rhonberg.

Constance.

'When I wrote to you, my dearest Duchess, from Lindau, I was full of hope that our angel Rosamund was better; but now my last hope is gone. The day on which I received your letter, she destroyed every latent expectation that I had entertained of her restoration to happiness. On

that day she poured forth, without constraint, the feelings of her soul, and presented me with such a picture of herself as rent my heart with anguish.

'It was at this moment that I swore to myself that sooner than see her die by inches beneath my eyes, I would sacrifice my own pride of feeling at the feet of that dear and noble friend—the generous but offended Mansfeldt! Stung to the soul as I was, at the state in which I beheld her, I no longer felt the ardent wish, with which you know I left Vienna, to conceal eternally from him the passion which destroys her. Then I thought that, if our cares failed to restore her, I could rather see her perish, than place the darling sister of my heart, the lovely idolised Clarenstein, at the mercy of any human being, though that human being is Mansfeldt! But this

courage is beyond my strength——Yet I must gain it; for now she has herself destroyed my design. I have no longer the power to serve her in aught, but to keep for ever secret the fatal point of honor which will surely conduct her to her grave.

'I determined then, my beloved Duchess, to write to the Duke of Laudohn. We rested at Constance for some days, and I took the occasion of her being, as I believed, asleep to write to him. Imagine, Hermione, if you can, what your haughty Rhonberg felt, as he traced the humiliating lines which implored the Duke to return and accept her hand! A thousand times I cast the pen from my hand——but then her image came before me, and I resumed it. The chamber in which I wrote, opened into an orchard, into which I went out to

collect my thoughts, and reflect in silence on what I should say.

'Here I had not been five minutes, when I saw her coming towards me with a letter in her hand—her air wild and disordered; and with difficulty she reached me before she fell into my arms, speechless with emotion. The scene which then took place, I cannot detail; for the war of feelings between us confounded all the expression of them. I only recollect that her first words were 'brother, I conjure you not to give me my death-stroke.' I know not what I said, but I imagine that I looked irresolute, for twice she fell at my feet, and every moment I expected to see her senses fail her for ever. Oh never shall I forget the look, the passionate kiss, she gave me when,

tearing the letter, I gave her my word to desist from this design. Then she became more calm: but she lay on my bosom like one dead. Her breathing, so slow and heavy, and those sweet eyes, once so brilliant, uplifted to heaven with such piercing, yet patient anguish! Oh Hermione, did Mansfeldt know!——I can recal but a few of her touching words. Once she said, 'I could on my knees receive Lord Mansfeldt's vows again, were he to return of his own free will, but to see him before me brought thither by compassion would at once destroy me.' At another time she said, 'the bosom of Lord Mansfeldt must either be to me a heaven or hell—there is no medium. I must either there revive to lead the life of the blessed in heaven, or wither day by day, and die at last. I will go on honoring and adoring him

as I have done, or I must die of grief to have offended him.'

'I told her that Lord Mansfeldt loved her still. Hermione, had you seen the look of mingled sorrow and indignation with which she heard me, you would have said that she was a noble soul in spite of all her errors. 'Yes,' she said, 'the noble Mansfeldt loves me, and scorns himself for doing it. Oh brother, what humiliation! what debasement! to be the object of a love unsanctioned by honor!' At these words, she took out of her bosom a letter and made me read it. It was half illegible, and so blotted with her tears, I could scarcely decypher it. Hermione, that letter stabbed her to the heart.'

'Oh heavens!' exclaimed Lord Mansfeldt as he read these lines, 'that letter is mine! wretch that I am! who would have bled in every vein for her. Perfidious Bronti——'

The remainder of the letter was addressed solely to the Duchess herself.

There are feelings too deep for tears——too profound for utterance. Lord Mansfeldt laid the letter in the lap of the Duchess—neither of them spoke. The sound of his carriage-wheels were heard. He came abruptly to the Duchess and said, 'Farewell, dearest lady; you see me for the last time, or you see me again the husband of Lady Clarenstein.'

The Duchess wept. She held out her hand Lord Mansfeldt. Round her arm was a acelet, which was clasped with a miniature of e Countess. Lord Mansfeldt's eyes fastened ı it.

'I have no picture of her,' he said.

'I thought you had.'

'No—it was restored.'

The Duchess unclasped, and gave it into his nds.

'There is something of that tender and comanding smile about that enchanting mouth. I nnot give you back this picture.'

'Keep it, my Lord.'

'Duchess,' cried Lord Mansfeldt in an ag
of emotion, 'tell me, I conjure you, what y
think of Lady Clarenstein's situation—what an
to hope?'

'Your presence will restore all soon.'

'Do you on your honor think so?'

'Yes, on my honor I do! there are wom
my Lord, to whom the heart being satisfie
life or death——such a one is Lady Ro
mund.'

'Terror,' exclaimed Lord Mansfeldt, 'has wholly seized me. I go, dearest lady, to live in her arms the life of the blessed in heaven, or I go to die of grief and regret.'

CHAPTER THE SIXTH.

THE Duke of Laudohn travelled night and day 'till he came to Constance, from whence the Duke's letter had been dated. He inquired the route taken by the Duke of Rhonberg, and, gaining some information, proceeded on his road in a state of mind, easier to be imagined than pourtrayed. All the way he passed, he gathered, from the peasantry, intelligence of the travellers, which filled him with unceasing disquietude. Here, at

this cottage, the lovely Clarenstein had rested for some hours—at another she had been seized with one of those sudden faintings. The whole country spoke of the sweet lady, who was seeking among their mountains a restoration to health. They even repeated some words which she had said. The Duke of Laudohn sighed as he perceived the enthusiasm, which she had inspired in these people, and for every word or anecdote they gave him, he scattered his gold at their feet, and thought them cheaply purchased.

When he arrived at St. Gal, they could give him no farther intelligence of the route which the travellers had taken. His servants were unable from fatigue to keep up with the Duke, at the speed with which he travelled. Rest for him there was none; but his humanity prevented him

from urging his attendants farther. He called therefore for a horse, resolving to proceed on a hired one, as his own were incapable of bearing him farther, and leaving his servants at that place for the night, with orders to follow him the next day, he set out alone the way the Duke of Rhonberg's carriage had taken on their departure.

It was about four o'clock in the afternoon, when the Duke of Laudohn began his journey. The road was mountainous and difficult. He could not proceed at any rapid rate, and the animal he rode was ill calculated to answer his impatience. He had gone several miles when he stopped at the bottom of a steep hill, intending, ere he mounted it, to give his horse some water, which was contained in a rude stone basin for the purpose of refreshing those animals. He

saw on the top of the hill two persons beginning to descend, whose figures attracted his attention. One of them was a beautiful girl in the picturesque dress of that country, tall, and finely shaped. A youth was by her side, bearing on his shoulder a pitcher. The firm and martial air of this youth was well suited to the wild and savage grandeur of the scenes around him, and the Duke thought that he had never beheld two beings more gifted by the hand of nature with beauty, strength, and freedom, than those before him. They seemed to have drunk in with the air of their own Alps, liberty and joy. The wind blew the dark hair of the mountain girl across her healthful cheek. Her complexion was the union of the richest tints, clear, bright, sun-burnt. They came on, talking with animation in the language of their country, and the laugh which burst from the lips of the

youth, made the rocks echo with gladness. 'At least,' said Lord Mansfeldt to himself, 'happiness is there.' Now as he was throwing himself off his horse, the peasants observed him. They stopped, and seemed to confer a while together; after which the youth set down his pitcher, and came forwards towards the Duke, who was slipping the bridle over his horse's head to allow him to drink, when the young man, touching his hat, with a military salute, said, in good German, 'I beg pardon, sir, for being so bold, but that office seems fitter for my hand than yours—— Pray let me lead him. The poor beast is very much tired.'

'I thank you, young man,' said the Duke; 'he is indeed weary, but I cannot give him any rest. I am myself reluctant to press him, but I have

no other resource.' The words were scarcely passed the Duke's lips, when the young man started and cried, 'what voice is that?' Now the Duke's hat being low on his forehead, he could not distinguish his features, but the Duke had already recognised in the Swiss a young soldier who had served under him, and who was indebted to him for procuring him his discharge, and many other favors which his excellent conduct had induced the General to grant him. 'Stephen,' he said in a tone of pleasure, 'is it you I see?'

Down at his feet the young soldier threw himself, seized the General's hand, and exclaimed, kissing it, 'It is, it is General Mansfeldt, my own general, my own master.'

'My good Stephen, I rejoice to see you.'

'Rejoice to see me!' cried Stephen. 'Do you say that to me, my noble general!' and the youth sprung on his feet, and threw his hat up in the air, and shouted for joy. In a word he was pretty nearly out of his senses.

'Be calm, Stephen,' said Lord Mansfeldt; 'tell me how life goes with thee.'

'Life, my noble General, is nothing but joy, and delight, and happiness, and I owe all that to you, which makes it ten times more joyful—But what is this? My noble master travelling alone in these wild hills! Ah, my Lord, you were not so the last time I saw you on horseback, when they gave up the town to you! Do you not remember, Sir, what hot work we had, and then there before their gates you stood to take their keys—banners

flying—trumpets piercing the air—cannons firing—and "Long live the Emperor! Long live General Mansfeldt!" Oh, that was a glorious day!'

'It was a glorious day,' cried the Duke, his eyes catching the fire of the youth's enthusiasm.

'Ah, but the next was happier for me, when I came into your tent for my discharge. There were all the officers standing before you—and shall I ever forget, that before them all, you took me by the hand, and said I was a brave fellow, and that I should have my discharge directly from my Colonel. Oh, certainly I did not cry like a woman when I got it, half for joy, half for sorrow, that I should never see my General more.'

'But you found your father well, Stephen?'

'No, my Lord, I found my father sick, heart-sick, more than aught else, lest I should never come home to him again. There was my mother, weeping herself blind, and my father groaning, and saying nothing but Stephen, Stephen, day and night—and so I came, and my father was well, and my mother—Oh, my Lord, it does my heart good to hear my mother bless you for sending me home. But here,' cried Stephen at length, 'here am I, talking away about myself. I hope that my noble general is happy too, and that he found all his friends as glad to see him, as mine were, after four years' absence?'

The Duke sighed, and evaded the question.

'Is that pretty woman your wife, Stephen?' he asked.

'No, not yet—not yet. Victoire,' said he, going up to her, and pulling her gently forward, 'this is General Mansfeldt.'

'She knows nothing of General Mansfeldt,' said the Duke, lifting his hat with a courteous grace, to the modest curtesy of the beautiful mountaineer.

'Not know General Mansfeldt!' cried out Stephen. 'Victoire, dont you know General Mansfeldt?'

She curtesied, and smiled.

'Why, my noble General, do you think that I have neither a heart nor a tongue?'

'Both, I believe, my good Stephen: one, I am sure, you have.'

'There is not a man, woman, or child, that does not know General Mansfeldt, within twenty miles round. I'll take care of that.'

Whilst Stephen was speaking, the Duke's attention had been totally absorbed by another object. The beautiful mountaineer stood before him, and the wind blowing aside a short cloak which she wore, he saw round her neck a rich Maltese cross, composed of verd-antique. It struck him that somewhere he had seen such a bauble before. The girl, observing his eyes

fixed upon it, said, with a blushing air, 'Indeed it is too rich a jewel for one of my condition to wear, but I cannot bear to take it off, so sweet a lady tied it round my neck.'

'A lady!'

'Oh, a heavenly angel, sure—but so ill, so pale, so very pale. I have been to carry her some grapes this afternoon. She was lying on a couch. She spoke to me so kindly, and such a voice she has! It is like the tone of that sweet flute, Stephen, that you broke.'

'Of whom,' exclaimed the Duke, much agitated, 'of whom are you speaking?'

'Of some noble travellers, my Lord,' replied Stephen, 'who lodged two nights since at our cottage down in the valley yonder. The young lady seemed indeed, as Victoire says, very ill. In the morning, the gentleman walked out, and chanced to take the way over the mountain that leads to the valley of Rozendehn, which he liked so much, that when the young lady arose, he took her to see it also, and she was so well pleased, that they have taken up their residence in a castle which stands there, belonging to the old Count Weimar, but not inhabited by any of his family. My father is the Count's steward. So that was soon settled.'

'What are the names of these travellers?' asked the Duke.

'They are brother and sister, my Lord. The lady is called Rosamund, and her brother Duke of—of—'

'Rhonberg, is it not?' exclaimed Lord Mansfeldt, breathless with emotion.

'Yes, my Lord, that is the name.'

Lord Mansfeldt walked a few paces away from the peasants: recovering his composure, he came back and said, 'Those travellers are my friends, whose route I have been, in vain, pursuing these ten days. Stephen, can you guide me to that valley?'

''Can I guide you, my Lord? To be sure I can. Victoire, you can take the pitcher down to my father's. It is not heavy.'

Victoire assented, but the Duke opposed it.

'No,' he said, 'go with her, Stephen. Take also my horse with you. I will await here your return.'

'I can take the horse, and the pitcher may stay here 'till I can fetch it,' said the beautiful mountaineer.

'Stephen has not, probably, forgotten,' said the Duke,' that a General's orders admit of no dispute. Go, therefore, fair creature, and accept of this purse—to purchase for Stephen another flute.'

The fair peasant hesitated: the Duke tossed the purse into a little basket which she carried on

her arm and walked away. The peasants disappeared. The Duke sat down on the edge of the stone basin, and, covering his face with his hands, submitted, in passive silence, to the war of passions in his soul. Love and terror, hope and apprehension, by turns raised him into transports, or sunk him in perplexity and fear. Thus still he sat, when Stephen quickly returning, they took together the road to Rozendehn. On the summit of the mountain, the whole valley appeared in sight. It was a narrow vale, through which a small lake rolled its silver waters. It was transparent as glass, and reflected the purple tints of the mountains, which rose high on all sides around, in wild and Alpine shapes. On the opposite bank of the lake, stood an ancient castle, its dusky turrets half seen between the trees. A sloping lawn extended to the verge of the lake,

and there Lord Mansfeldt beheld a groupe of persons, whom speedily he recognised. A couch was spread beneath the thick shade of some ancient lime trees. A lady reposed there, and at her feet sat a gentleman, whose head was bent on his hand, which rested on his knee. Two women sat at a distance at work. Silence and sorrow seemed to prevail amongst that groupe—they seemed like motionless statues, which had stood there for revolving ages as monuments of some strange romance, rather than human forms gifted with life. The Duke felt a superstitious awe creep through his veins—so lifeless and so tranquil was that couch—so still the air—so solemn her repose, that it was more like death, beautiful in its horror, than a real vision. On the edge of the lake, a small boat was moored. Lord Mansfeldt cast himself into it: Stephen took the oars,

and the boat passed rapidly across the smooth surface of the lake.

That evening had been spent by the noble travellers with less anguish than they had known for some time. Lady Clarenstein, who breathed with greater freedom in the open air, was accustomed to spend the day in the shade of some tranquil spot. The Duke had been reading to her, when she sunk into a gentle slumber, lulled by his voice. Now he sat absorbed in thought, 'till the gentle dashing of the oars made him lift up his eyes. Believing them to be peasants, he looked not steadily at them, 'till he heard a voice of one of the passengers speaking to the other, and he distinguished these words. 'Row to a distance from that groupe. Land me behind that rock.' The Duke's attention was now imperiously

called to him who had spoken. His voice he had not recognised, nor could he his figure, for the Duke of Laudohn had wrapt himself up in a large cloak—but there was something in his tall and majestic proportions as he lay in the boat, which could belong to no peasant. The boat disappeared behind the jutting rock, and presently the Duke saw it swiftly returning, but without the stranger. Perplexed, and fearing for the Countess an intrusion, the Duke now arose, and went towards the rock, and soon he saw the stranger advancing in the same direction. Once the Duke thought that it might be the owner of the castle, but he was an aged man, and this, in spite of the care that he took to conceal himself, had the spring of youth in his tread, and the port of a prince. Irresolute whether to advance farther, the Duke paused. The stranger beckoned him,

and he proceeded. 'My friend does not know me then?' cried the stranger, throwing off his hat.

The Duke clasped him to his breast. 'Thou here, Mansfeldt! What brings thee?'

'Even the destiny of all my life!' he answered. 'I have travelled night and day. I come from Vienna—The Duchess is well—I saw her—I bear a letter from her to—that angel. But how is she?'

'Speak lower!' cried the Duke. 'Come this way. She sleeps, and were she to hear the sound of your voice, or see you, unprepared, it were perchance—'

'Your looks strike me with terror, Duke.'

'I think her not in danger—only sick at heart—heart-broken.'

When the Duke had led Lord Mansfeldt to a distance, beneath the thick trees, he conjured Mansfeldt to explain the motive which had led him to that spot. Lord Mansfeldt obeyed, and when he had unveiled to the Duke the secret of the Prince di Bronti, and all its consequences on the mind of Lady Clarenstein—when he acknowledged that his offended honor was satisfied—that had he known that fatal circumstance, no human power could have disunited him from her, the noble brother raised his hands to heaven, and wept. 'But,' cried Lord Mansfeldt, 'will she receive me? what am I to hope? Will she believe

that I was guiltless of a conduct so detestable and audacious as that, with which the Prince charged me? If not—I am lost. Tell me, Duke, does she yet regard me?'

'Look at her,' answered the Duke. 'A veil is on her face, and her eyes you cannot see. But behold the languor of that form, once elastic with vigor and animation. It speaks no dubious tale.'

Lord Mansfeldt turned away his head.

'We must be very cautious,' cried the Duke; 'nothing unguarded and precipitate in breaking this to her must be ventured—such strong transitions to a frame so weakened—'

'Oh, Duke, you torture my very soul!'

'I think that she stirs. Yes, Helene goes to her.'

'I will begone—Take this letter from the Duchess.'

'That,' said the Duke, 'will be a means of awakening her suspicions. It bears, I see, the simple address of her name. Wait here till I call you. I will not answer for a single rash step on your part, to appear before her.'

'I will wait till I hear you call—but remember, Duke, it is my life that you have in your hands.'

'And hers, and my own,' replied the Duke, pressing Lord Mansfeldt's hand warmly, as he left him.

He went to his sister, and said, as he sat down by her side, 'Hast thou slept, beloved?'

'Yes, and I feel refreshed by it. How kind you are, my noble brother—Heaven shall thank you hereafter.'

'*You* also must prepare to thank me!'

'What means that joy in your eye, my brother, and why do you smile upon me?'

'I bring you a letter that you will like.'

'From the Duchess, is it?'

'Yes.'

'Ah, give it me—dear Hermione!' Now the address of this letter was "Rosamund, Countess of Clarenstein," without a post-mark. This she observed, and said, 'You also then have had letters?'

'No—I have none.'

'How came this, then?'

'By a private hand.'

'Is any one travelling in this wild country, except ourselves? I thought Rozendehn had been

the asylum only of my tears,' said she, sighing gently.

'There is something now in the vale of Rozendehn beside tears. There is love and hope.'

'Yes, I know. I had forgot the sweet Victoire. She is happy.'

'I do not speak of Victoire now.'

'Of whom then?'

'Of him who brought that letter.'

'Who is that?'

'One whom I love and honor.'

'Why then is he not here?'

'He dare not come 'till you permit him.'

'Till I permit him, dearest brother, and he is a friend of yours! But perhaps he is afraid of a sick woman. Yet I am not so sick but I can welcome a friend of yours. Let us send to him.' And she beckoned to Helene.

'No,' cried the Duke, arresting her hand, 'he will not come, unless I call him.'

'Well, then, do you call him.'

The Duke was silent.

'Are you jesting with me?' she asked.

'Jesting with you, my angel? no.'

'Now there are tears in your eyes! 'Tis very strange who this unknown friend is, that makes such disorder, and will not appear.'

'While you slept,' said the Duke, 'I walked on the banks of the lake, and I saw an eagle descending from the heights. He brought you that letter.'

'Sweet brother, this is merry mockery.'

'Nay, Rosamund, 'tis no mockery—it was a *Royal eagle* too, I saw.'

That word, by which, in former times, Lord Mansfeldt had been called by them, now so em-

phatically pronounced, brought the color into her face, and as quickly it retired. She said mournfully, 'Surely my noble brother would not play on my sad heart with that name!'

'It was a royal eagle which I saw.'

Lady Rosamund fixed on the Duke a piercing look.

'Yes,' he said with great coolness, 'you are right.'

With a degree of firmness, that was almost frightful, she replied, 'Then that royal eagle comes with death on his wings.'

'Say, rather, with life and restoration.'

'Cruel brother!' she exclaimed, pushing the Duke from her, 'now, indeed, you have destroyed me!'

'And does Rosamund believe me to be void of all truth and honor, and that my word is nothing?'

'I will *never* see him,' she said in the same absolute tone; 'of that be satisfied.'

'Then die!' cried the Duke in a severe voice. 'Destroy us all. Stab Mansfeldt to the heart, and for all my cares, do the same to me.'

'It is cruel to say that to me. But I told you the truth when I fell at your feet in the garden of

Constance—and, in doing this, you have given me a mortal stab.'

'I also told you the truth, when I swore in the garden at Constance, that I never would declare to Mansfeldt the passion which consumes you.'

'Tell me, is Lord Mansfeldt here?'

'He is.'

'And you did *not* send to him—nor by any means recal him?'

'Think as you please of me!' said the Duke, assuming an offended air.

'What can I think but that—I know you cannot see me die!' said Lady Rosamund with a bitter smile.

'You think then that I have a heart, though I have no honor. I thank you for that justice, at least.'

Lady Rosamund fell on the Duke's neck.

'No,' he cried, 'you think me false. A soul without honor. I bring you the blessing of heaven, and you dare to suspect me.'

'Brother, brother—wherefore comes Lord Mansfeldt?'

'To live for you, or die with you, as you please to pronounce.'

'Brought hither by his own compassion.'

'Proud Rosamund. Still so haughty!'

'Is it not so?'

'Compassion alone would never bring Mansfeldt to the feet of any woman that he could not esteem—'

'Then why, in mockery to me, return? Know I not that esteem for me, he has, he can have, none.'

'He has, however, restored to you that esteem —He has been slandered--deceived—he now returns, but not to be worthily received, I think.'

Lady Clarenstein put her hand to her head. 'Pray be more gentle with me!' she said: 'Indeed I am very miserable. I cannot understand what this is—What is this you tell me?' And she let her head fall on the Duke's shoulder.

'It is simply this, beloved, that had Mansfeldt earlier known, what now he does know, he never would have left thee! Does my sweet Rosamund know of nothing which, had it been declared, would have palliated her conduct?'

'Not in Mansfeldt's mind.'

'Has the Prince di Bronti nothing to disclose?'

'The Prince di Bronti!' she repeated and shuddered—'Yes; but he will never suffer me to declare what—'

'The Prince di Bronti has acted the part of a false villain to you and Mansfeldt,' exclaimed the Duke vehemently.

'Indeed, I do now think that he much abused my ear.'

'Detested slanderer!' cried the Duke. 'But now all is known, and from the Prince's own lips, and this it is that brings Mansfeldt hither to thee, beloved. He has travelled night and day. The

noble heart could not bear to have thee think that he could act so disloyally towards thee.'

'He is, indeed, and ever was to me, kind and generous. He will, therefore, now grant to me his pardon, and I shall die the happier for it. Do not, however, force me to see him. That would be barbarous; for, to say the truth, now that he could forgive me, it is dreadful to have been so cheated—to see a person one has loved, go away from one for ever.'

'You no longer love Mansfeldt, then?'

'Whether I do or not, he will know some time, when I am laid in peace at Rhonberg.'

'Mansfeldt hopes a far other proof of your love than death.'

'What proof can I now give him, but that? What avails it now to love? Nay, Rhonberg, is it not become a crime to die for him—other ties—The Princess Adelaide will be Mansfeldt's wife—I am a wretch who might have been, and who dies of grief.'

'The Princess Adelaide will never be Mansfeldt's wife.'

She shook her head.

'She loves another.'

'Another!'

'The Prince di Bronti has Lady Adelaide's heart. Thou, Mansfeldt's!'

'I!—Brother, beware—'tis instant death to deceive me, for thy words raise such hope!'

'The Princess Adelaide loves the perfidious Bronti. Mansfeldt is much beholden to her. It is she who forced the Prince to confess all.'

Lady Rosamund uttered a cry. 'Save me!' she exclaimed, 'for this is like the power of heaven on my brain!'

'Beloved—be calm—be patient. Look on me, Rosamund—Would I deceive you! It is truth. Mansfeldt adores—lives—dies—as you

command. Where is your strength? Now will you see Mansfeldt? Shall I call?'

'Brother!'—pantingly she exclaimed, 'one moment—Mansfeldt—Mansfeldt—where is he?'

'Raymond, come!' cried the Duke, in a loud voice.

What a call was that to hear! what a form is that, indistinctly seen, rapidly advancing. Her head is laid on the Duke's bosom. But her ear hears a tread. Her heart feels a presence. Her hands are covered with burning tears. Yet she is motionless. 'Look up, beloved,' cried her Brother. She raises her head—but a thick mist is before her eyes—murmuring sounds fill her ears. She presses her hands on her bosom.

'Oh, now let me live, sweet heaven!' she cried. The Duke trembles at this struggle between joy and anguish, which contend for mastery in a frame so weakened. It is the crisis of life or death passing in her. No one speaks, not even Mansfeldt. She draws his hands on her heart, which beats faintly. She smiles. She would fain clear the mist from her eyes—but the lids fall gradually, and she sinks back into the Duke's arms without sense or motion. Lord Mansfeldt sprung on his feet.

'Be not so terror-struck!' cried the Duke; 'the moment that I dreaded is past. She will revive. Retire awhile, my Brother.'

The rose of the world did revive. But when she unclosed her eyes, and beheld not the lord

of her life, she sighed heavily, and said, 'Gone like the rest. It was an unreal vision!'

'No, beloved. It was a real vision. But it fled dismayed, when you fainted.'

'Recal him once again!'

Lord Mansfeldt came.

'Lord of my life,' she said, 'forgive me, if to thy dear return, I can give naught but tears. The spirit of the haughty Rosamund is broken—say but that thou art reconciled to me, and I live again.'

Oh what an embrace was that, thrice impressed, which the noble Laudohn gave her as he repeated, 'I am reconciled to thee.'

The Duke of Rhonberg left them, and returned not 'till their conference had been long, till all had on either side been said, and love reigned triumphant, as it had done in the Vale of Rhonberg. The Duke heard his own name pronounced by his sister; he heard her say, 'Let that dear and noble brother rejoice with us: he who bore all the weariness of my sick heart, who watched by me when I slept, and poured consolation into my ear when I awoke. He who, in a word, preserved me for this hour. Even through the darkness which enveloped me, his dear affection shot a gleam of comfort. For *Thee*, lord of my life, I wished to die! For *Him*, I almost wished to live!'

The Duke came at these words, and fell on his sister's neck, and felt her tears and embraces

on his cheek. Was ever joy equal to hers, as she heard them both ask of heaven for her ten thousand blessings.

'Heaven,' she cried, 'can give no more!—but, lord of my life, restrain these transports—Soft—no more—lest again the vision fly me—Brother, take me home.'

They bore her to the castle, and she rested that night in the repose of heaven.

'Oh love be moderate! allay this extasy,
In measure rain thy joy, scant this excess,
I feel too much thy blessing.'

CHAPTER THE LAST.

Is there a spot on earth where happiness is without alloy? It is in the Vale of Rozendehn. There the rose of the world raises its head, heavy with the tears of the storm. It freshens into its wonted beauty, and drinks in new life from an air, embalmed by the breath of love. A month has been spent at Rozendehn. It is evening.

The birds warble amongst the trees—the air is impurpled by the glory of the setting sun. A breeze, laden with aromatic odors from the Alpine groves, ripples the surface of the lake. On its sloping banks, the noble lovers slowly tread. The bride has placed a white rose in her braided hair. She has cast on her head a veil of woven air. Her robe of silk rustles in the breeze. What makes her dark eye fall and retire, as it does incessantly, from the glances of one adored, yet feared? Within an hour, in the Chapel of Rozendehn, the sister of the Duke will become Duchess of Laudohn.

They pause on the verge of the lake. A little month is past since there she lay in sad and cheerless repose; since the royal eagle, descending from yonder heights, came with joy on his wings.

Hark! The clock from the castle tower strikes six. It is the hour. A gentle stir is heard from thence, and down the sloping lawn the Duke rapidly approaches.

'One dear embrace,' cries the enamored Laudohn, 'while yet no tie but that of love enchains thee.'

'Come, beloved!' cried the Duke of Rhonberg, 'the priest is ready at the altar.'

'Thou most dear and noble brother!' exclaimed the bride, casting herself on his neck, bathed in tears, such as angels weep, when love and gratitude oppress them.

'Enough!' cried the Duke, 'no more—lest you make a woman of me, and I disgrace my manhood by tears. Love me still—'tis all I ask. Raymond—Brother—thy hand—take hers——By my soul, not with more rapture did I join my own to her who bears my name. Now let us go to the foot of the altar, and may heaven bless this marriage.'

The cloud which overhung the palace of greatness is dispersed. Half pensive with excess of bliss, Love sighs, and veils the rich luxuriance of his joy. He smiles—but those eyes where rapture revels amid the tears of past anguish, they are shaded. He blesses the bower, and casts on it, with a lavish hand, enchantments rare, mysterious, consecrated. He blends the torch with the sacred fire of Hymen, and forms that union,

and combination bright, of innocence with love—on earth believed indeed, desired, but rarely known.

CONCLUSION.

ROZENDEHN was purchased by the Duke, and presented by him to his sister, as a nuptial gift. The valley, which love had consecrated, was oft revisited by the noble lovers. Stephen and Victoire were united, and under the protection of the Duke and Duchess of Laudohn, inhabited the castle.

Rhonberg opened its gates of pride to receive the Duchess of Laudohn, and her marriage was

there celebrated with all the magnificence of her house. A reunion with Hermione, and her lovely children, was all that was wanting to her happiness on earth.

The young and amiable Princess, to whose friendship she owed so much, became the sister of her heart, and not long after she accepted the hand of the Prince di Bronti with the royal consent and approbation.

The Duchess of Laudohn, realised in her conduct, as the wife of Lord Mansfeldt, the fondest expectations which ever, amidst all her wild caprices, had been nourished in the bosom of her brother. If over the brightness of this jewel of his house a transient dimness had been cast, he saw with exultation that her virtues

effaced that impression from the memory of those who had been ill disposed to grant that her virtues equalled her charms of captivation. In a word, it was the desire of her heart and its pride to justify in the eyes of the world the passionate attachment of the Duke her husband, which for her sake had made him forgive so much, and if there was yet in her soul a wish more profound, and dearer still, it was to guard with incessant care the happiness of so noble and exalted a being, since he had deigned to place that power within her hands.

THE END.

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